CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO LIBRARY COLLECTION ASSESSMENT

Collection development is a planning function that is necessary for the systematic building of library collections. It usually includes such traditional functions as selection, acquisition, assessment, gifts and exchange, conservation, preservation, and weeding. It may also be extended to include cooperative collection development activities through both formal and informal resource sharing efforts. Collection Assessment is the process of evaluating how well the collection development program meets the policies of the institution and the information needs of its user community. A collection assessment offers the opportunity for library staff to objectively determine a collection's strengths and weaknesses, the directions or trends that its development is following, how it compares with collections in institutions with similar missions, and acts as a basis for prescribing appropriate development actions for the future.

Assessment and the Planning Process

The assessment and planning process involves several stages and should be examined thoroughly before it is begun. The following guidelines describe the steps and outcomes of the assessment and planning process:

1.   Establish mission and policy statements

2.   Describe existing conditions

3.   Review strengths and weaknesses of a collection

4.   Consider external and internal factors and trends

5.   Set goals about the desired strength for the collection

6.   Develop strategies to meet goals and determine how the library can attain the desired collection level

7.   Evaluate success in meeting the goals

The *Network of Alabama Academic Libraries (NAAL) Collection Assessment Manual* focuses on the planning activities needed for collection assessment: reviewing strengths and weaknesses, developing goals, and developing strategies to meet goals. It was created specifically to assist Alabama's librarians, subject bibliographers, collection development officers, and other assessors prepare for the library component of new academic proposals required by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE).   The library component evaluates whether or not an existing collection adequately supports a proposed program's goals and, if not , outlines what needs to be done to insure that it will.

This manual describes a number of techniques that have been useful in systematic collection assessment. While originally intended to provide guidance for assessments supporting new program proposals, it additionally has application for institutional review of existing programs, self-studies prepared for accrediting agencies, grant applications, and for proposals undertaken for the NAAL collection development program. The manual also provides guidance in analyzing assessment data, establishing collection development policies, and for presenting final reports of assessment findings.

The assessor should have no difficulty applying the measurement techniques and procedures outlined in the manual.   Assessment is a complex process that is not easily codified or quantified; the measurements are not an end in themselves. The most valuable asset an assessor can bring to the process is professional judgment. The professional librarian contributes knowledge of collections and users to the analysis and interpretation of data collected using the methodologies described in this manual.

One outcome of the assessment process will be an initial step toward a collection development policy for the subject under review. The assessment activities will clarify a number of issues to help define the scope of the collection and determine materials to be added to sustain the collection at the desired level. This initial work should be incorporated into the library's collection development policy.

Planning And Documenting the Assessment

Collection assessment has several stages:

- Data Collection
- Data Interpretation
- Report Writing

Careful planning of the entire process will insure a thorough, systematic assessment that fully meets the intended purpose of the assessment. Adequate planning can assure completion of the assessment in a reasonable time period and with a minimum disruption of other library functions. Early planning decisions can facilitate actual data collection and analysis and answer such questions as who will do the assessment, how long it will take, what sources will provide data, and what will be done as a result of the assessment report of findings. An early planning task would be to identify and, if

necessary, implement a planning cycle. With a cycle, the assessor will identify baseline

data that is already being collected or will be collected regularly. If data are already

collected regularly, it will be much easier to complete an assessment.   Also, once an

assessor completes the work required for an assessment, the results should be used to

guide future decisions about the collection; unutilized data is wasted.

During planning, a number of decisions can be made to facilitate actual data

collection and analysis.

Assigning Responsibility for an Assessment

In most libraries, an assessor will be designated from the staff to be responsible

for the development and maintenance of a subject area under review. Job titles for this

staff position may vary. A critical factor is that the assessor must have been involved in

collection development to insure knowledge of the field and familiarity with the

patterns of scholarly publication. Some libraries use a task force with various activities

assigned to several staff members. If this latter style is used, one person should have

the designated responsibility for overall coordination with the other staff responsible

for meeting deadlines and completing the assessment.

Library administrators may realize that the skills needed to undertake an

assessment do not exist among current staff. If assessment is to become a routine

responsibility incorporated into ongoing plans for the library, the skills necessary for

effective collection assessment and collection management must be developed in

existing staff or sought in new staff.

Another concern is insuring that the time required for a thorough assessment is available in conjunction with ongoing job responsibilities. Time allocations must be developed that will reflect an ongoing responsibility for assessment as a regular part of the library program.

Determining Assessment Length of Time

The time and effort needed for an assessment will vary with the field under investigation and the expertise of the assessor. An experienced assessor with good knowledge of the discipline and its collection will certainly require less time than an inexperienced assessor. An interdisciplinary program will require more time than a single discipline. If a team approach is selected, additional time may be required for communication and coordination among team members. Initial consultations and discussions of results also take time and must be scheduled as part of the assessment process. Finally, the assessment methodology selected can affect the amount of time required.

Librarians preparing assessments for the Research Libraries Group (RLG) have estimated that 40 hours are needed to complete a subject area in the RLG Conspectus. In general, large academic libraries budget between 25 and 40 hours per subject with allowances made for the various factors that can affect the process. Blaine Hall at Brigham Young University estimates that clerical staff can check about one citation per minute in the catalog. He also estimates that fifteen hours would be required to create a 300-item sample list (Hall, p. 5). A typical estimate might be: professional time -- 30 hours; clerical time -- 8 hours. This would include time for planning, analysis, and

report writing as well as time for data collection. If each library estimates time needed from the very first assessment done and checks against actual time used, an accurate scale to use for time estimates can be developed.

Reviewing Background Materials

In the past several years, increased emphasis on collection development has resulted in several excellent publications. The bibliography for this section recommends some background reading that every assessor should review before starting. One essential publication is *Guide for Written Collection Policy Statements* (Anderson).

Another useful publication for academic libraries is *The Conspectus Method: A Collection Assessment Handbook* (Bushing, Davis, and Powell), which describes a methodology for completing an assessment based on the Western Library Network (WLN) assessment methodology. It details the collection level codes and describes how an assessment should be implemented.

Knowing the Subjects to Be Assessed

The assessor should be knowledgeable about the collection subject area to be evaluated in order to chose the appropriate assessment methodology.   It is helpful for the assessor to describe the characteristics of the literature in the field. Among the questions that should be answered are:

1.   What are the trends for scholarly publication?

2.   Does the field rely on monographs, serials, proceedings, etc.?

3.   Does it have a geographical or chronological emphasis?

4. Does the field rely on primary and/or secondary sources?

5. What is the relationship of older materials to current research needs?

6. Is there an emphasis on special formats, such as non-print media, documents, software, databases, etc.?

7. Are there digital products that support research in the field?

8. Are digital products accessible to patrons at no additional cost?

Some of this information may be obtained from a guide to literature of the field (if one exists), interviews with faculty members and/or subject bibliographers, or from the assessor's own experience. The characteristics of the literature can help in selection of the assessment methodology. If a good guide exists, it may be the ideal tool for list checking. A citation analysis may be needed if no suitable list exists or if reliance is primarily on serials. A very broad, general field or a new, emerging field of study may best be evaluated by an expert consultant.

Documenting the Assessment

Library planners need to assure that the work done for assessments is not redundant. Part of planning an assessment should include how documentation will be maintained to prevent any work from being done twice. Also, it makes little sense to check a list for an assessment, fail to record the results, and then recheck the list as decisions are being made about retrospective acquisitions.

The library should provide a central place to document the assessment. Some libraries include notes about assessments with their master collection development

policy manual. Whenever a list is checked, the citation is added to the manual along with relevant notes, for example:

> *"The reference copy is marked with library's holdings"*

> *"All desirable titles not held have been ordered"*

> *"Titles needed for the collection have been marked and should be ordered if funds become available"*

> *"Professor XYZ reviewed the titles not held and decided that none should be added because they are not relevant to the curriculum"*

Such notes should be initialed by the assessor and dated.

In libraries undertaking systematic assessments, it is helpful to record when an assessment is done by subject and who participated. A brief summary of the assessment findings and actions taken as a result of the assessment should be included. The "Collection Development Assessment" form at the end of this chapter may help record information pertinent to an assessment.

Checklist for Planning and Completing an Assessment

When conducting a collection assessment project, a checklist can be helpful in delineating the stages. The following list outlines what steps should be taken by an assessor when leading and executing an assessment.

- **Determine Library Resources Needed to Complete the Assessment**
  Conducting an assessment can be time consuming, and it is easy to underestimate the contributions of staff and the time it will take to complete it. This is especially true if scheduling problems occur. It is helpful to detail what staff assistance and other resources will be needed and to schedule them in advance of the actual assessment.

- **Identify Personnel Who Will Participate in the Assessment**
  Provide them with an overview of the process and its goals and objectives in order to elicit cooperation in what may be a project filled with drudgery.

    - **Training**
      If necessary, train staff in specific techniques as needed.

- **Establish a Timetable**
  Select starting and ending dates, even if these dates are only proposed.

    - **Start Date**
      Record the scheduled starting date to insure the assessment is completed on time. The assessor should take into consideration the schedules of staff involved and the project work load.

    - **Completion Date**
      It is helpful to establish a date when the collection assessment will be completed. Be sure that enough time is allowed for completion of the data collection component. This always seems to take more time than is scheduled initially.

- **Review Current Policies**
  Review any existing collection development policies that apply to the subject area(s). Write a surrogate collection development policy statement for the subject, completing as much as possible a description of scope and emphasis, related existing resources, characteristics of the literature, audience, and any difference in library needs by type or levels of user, relevant LC and/or Dewey classes, and the desired collecting intensity levels for these classes or subsets of classes.

    - **Name of Program and Department**
      This may be a working name for the assessment project. It may or may not accurately reflect the subjects to be evaluated, but it is an initial description. Record the name of the department for reference.

        - **Department Contact Person**
          It is helpful to designate a contact person to answer questions as they arise. This person should be familiar with details of the subject or area being assessed.

- **Collection Subject Areas**
  Department or area names do not always translate readily into subject descriptors used by librarians. The actual collection being assessed may draw from many areas. If possible, describe the collection using LC or Dewey classification numbers and descriptors. This will be helpful in conducting shelflist counts of titles and in locating numbers of titles published in the field. Be careful to identify any unclassified materials (such as government documents, major microforms, recordings, A-V formats, machine-readable databases, software) which may not be included in the catalog of library materials.

- **Determine an Assessment Methodology**
  An important decision made by the assessor will be the selection of a methodology or methodologies that will be used to collect the information required for an evaluative judgment. In addition, the data collection process should provide sufficient information for correcting any collection weaknesses and establishing cost estimates to meet the desired collection intensity. Consult with other librarians knowledgeable about the subject to select the appropriate evaluative method(s).

  - **Sources for Assessment**
    Select the bibliographies (for list checking), source documents (for citation analysis), and/or consultant (for expert appraisal) that will be used.

  - **Other Sources**
    Determine any other sources of data or information that may be helpful.

- **Assign Collection Codes**
  Collection codes are numbers and letters assigned to the collection to illustrate its depth, language coverage, and sometimes preservation levels.

  - **Collection Level Desired**
    Many academic libraries use the RLG Conspectus or the WLN Conspectus to describe collection levels. Before starting the assessment, decide what description methodology will be used. Carefully review the appropriate manual (academic librarians would review *Manual for the North American Inventory of Research Collections* or *Using the Conspectus Method: A Collection Assessment Handbook*), the collection level codes, and any available discipline-specific supplemental guidelines. Then, select the desired collection level.

- **Language(s) and Other Formats**

  If assessment and collection building policies will be affected by the inclusion of special materials in the collection, this should be noted in detail. Reliance on conference proceedings, patents, government documents, or materials in languages other than English can have an impact on the assessment methodology and the evaluative judgments. The RLG and WLN collection level codes include codes for language but not for other factors such as geographic coverage or materials in non-print formats. These variations should be noted.

- **Digital Resources**

  Digital resources are equivalent to print materials at any level if their access is equal to print access (including charts and graphics), the information comes at no cost to the patron, and patrons have access to a sufficient number of terminals and lines in the library. This holds true for electronic books and digital journals, such as e-book and e-journal collections. Journal issues obtained through aggregator databases should not be counted because aggregators cannot guarantee continued holdings of a title.

- **Recognize Other Considerations in an Evaluation**

  In an evaluation, materials are not the only consideration. An evaluator must also factor space, staffing, and other libraries in the assessment.

  - **Space and Facilities Needs**

    Assessors generally do not include facilities in an assessment directed strictly toward collection evaluation. There may be special circumstances, however, where space restrictions will affect the collection development plan. For instance, the assessor will want to note if the collection will not fit into a small department library, if the subject areas are housed in several locations and cannot be unified, or if additional space will be needed for such items as audio-visual equipment. If facilities for the collection will have impact on the program, then space needs should be included in the library component report. These needs should also take into consideration the computer or server space needed for electronic databases and serials, as well as the physical space for patron and staff computers.

  - **Staffing Needs**

    Staffing needs are also an optional factor for the library component report. However, if there is a clear need for additional staff in order to make these materials accessible, the assessor may want to state this in the report. Staff time can be reported as part of a full-time equivalent (FTE).

- **Cooperative Arrangements**
  Resource sharing enables libraries to rely on access rather than ownership for some materials. If the assessor plans to include other collections in the evaluation, these should be identified along with the procedures through which access to these collections will be provided.

- **Prepare Worksheets and Forms**
  Worksheets and forms for recording survey results may be used. An example of a worksheet follows, but any form used should address the name of the assessor, assessment methodology, and collection levels.

- **Conduct the Evaluation**
  Be aware of the timetable and conduct the evaluation according to the chosen method. During the evaluation, the primary assessor should remain in contact with the staff to keep all aware of the status of the assessment. At this point, the timetable should also be reassessed and any changes made to the schedule.

- **Analyze Survey Results**
  Study the survey results. Be sure to include estimated one-time and ongoing costs associated with enhancing the collection.

- **Write the Full Report**
  Instructions for preparing the collection assessment report, along with sample reports, are in Chapter 7.

Collection Development Assessment

1.   Date of Assessment:

2.   Academic Program:

3.   Assessor:

4.   Other Asessors:

5.   Academic Program: _____

       a) Highest Degree Level Offered: _____

       b) Number of teaching faculty (FTE)   _____

       c) Number of students enrolled (FTE)   _____(yearly average)

       d) Number of degrees conferred in each of last three academic years:

6.   Classification Ranges for Subject Field:

7.   Collection Level:

       Existing Collection Strength: _____   Language Code: _____

       Desired Collection Strength: _____   Language Code: _____

NOTES:

8.   Collection Foundation: _____   _____   _____
                                       Number   Number   Percent
                                       Checked   Held

Guide to Reference Books (edition_____ date_____) (Include updates
published annually in *College and Research Libraries*)

Section:_____   _____   _____

Section:_____   _____   _____

Action Taken/Recommended:

Books for College Libraries (edition_____ date_____)

Section:_____   _____   _____

Section:_____   _____   _____

Action Taken/Recommended:

Other Standard Guide or List (Identify):

_____ _____   _____   _____

_____ _____   _____   _____

Action Taken/Recommended:

Periodical Index or Other Serial List (Identify):

_____ _____   _____   _____

Action Taken/Recommended:

PLANNING AND DOCUMENTING THE ASSESSMENT
For Further Reading

American Library Association, Subcommittee on Guide for Training Collection Development Librarians. *Guide for Training Collection Development Librarians.* Chicago: American Library Association, 1996.

Anderson, Joanne S., ed. *Guide for Written Collection Policy Statements.* 2nd ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 1996.

Blixrud, Julia C. "Counting Electronic Serials: A Discussion Document." May 1988. *Association of Research Libraries.* 30 April 2002. <http://www.arl.org/stats/counting.html>.

Bushing, Mary, Burns Davis, and Nancy Powell. *Using the Conspectus Method: A Collection Assessment Handbook.* Lacey, WA: WLN, 1997.

Evans, G. Edward. *Developing Library and Information Center Collections*, 4th ed. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 2000.

Fales, S.L, ed. *Guide for Training Collection Development Librarians.* Chicago: American Library Association, 1996.

Futas, Elizabeth. *Collection Development Policies and Procedures.* 3rd ed. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx, 1995.

Gorman, G.E. and Ruth H. Miller. *Collection Management for the 21st Century: A Handbook for Librarians.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997.

Hall, Blaine H. *Collection Assessment Manual for College and University Libraries.* Phoenix: Oryx Press, 1985.

Henderson, William A., W.J. Hubbard and Sonja L. McAbee. "Collection Assessment in Academic Libraries: Institutional Effectiveness in Microcosm," *Library Acquisitions* 17 (Summer 1993): 197-201.

Pastine, Maureen, ed. *Collection Development: Past and Future.* New York: Haworth Press, 1996.

Reed-Scott, Jutta. *Manual for the North American Inventory of Research Library Collections.* Office of Management Studies, Association of Research Libraries, 1985.

For Further Reading, *continued*

Rowley, Gordon and William K. Black. "Consequences of Change: The Evolution of
    Collection Development," *Collection Building* 15, no. 4 (1996): 22-30.

The following publications describe characteristics of broad academic disciplines:

Blazek, Ron and Elizabeth Aversa. *The Humanities: A Selective Guide to Information
    Sources.* 5th ed. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 2000.

Herron, Nancy L. The Social Sciences: A Cross-disciplinary Guide to Selected Sources.
    Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 2002

Hurt, Charlie Deuel. *Information Sources in Science and Technology.* Englewood, CO:
    Libraries Unlimited, 1998.

Stern, David. *Guide to Information Sources in the Physical Sciences.* Englewood, CO:
    Libraries Unlimited, 2000.

Two surveys of the literature related to collection management provide guidance to
sources of useful for background information:

Pastine, Maureen. "Collection Development: Past and Future Bibliography," *Collection
    Management* 21, no. 3-4 (1996): 179-234.

---. "Guide to Collection Development Bibliography," *Collection Management* 21, no. 3-4
    (1996): 157-177.

CHAPTER 2

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT DATA
USEFUL FOR AN ASSESSMENT

Librarians have made a great effort to develop assessment methodologies that provide quantitative data useful for objective evaluations of a library's collections. In some subject areas, methodologies resulting in quantifiable data may be readily available. In others, data collection may still rely solely on subjective judgment. The assessor will have to determine what methodology or combination of methodologies will result in sufficient data for analysis. It falls to the professional judgment of the assessor to determine what interpretation will be placed on the data collected and what report of collection adequacy will be made.

A first assessment project task is determining what gross data are available and how frequently these data have been collected historically. Almost all libraries can report the numbers of materials held, usually in such categories as books, serials, microforms, etc. These data are usually generated by the library's computerized system and may also be available through regular reports made to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). NCES compiles the Academic Library Survey every two years. Its online *Academic Library Peer Comparison Tool* allows assessors to extract information about a particular library or to customize a peer group by selecting key variables to define the group. Assessors can then view customized reports comparing the library of interest and its peers on a variety of variables as selected by the assessor.

One example of a comparison based on title counts is the *North American Title Count* (NATC) compiled every four years by the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services and most recently published in 2002 in CD-ROM format.   This report displays comparative title count data for a number of libraries (primarily academic, some large public libraries, and four of the largest federal libraries). These data can be used to compare gross size of collections among similar libraries. The title count says nothing about quality and is only a rough comparison for size of collections.

The Network of Alabama Academic Libraries has compiled statistical reports for its members since 1984. Historical data are available from the NAAL office. Beginning with the NCES Academic Survey for 2000, NAAL started collecting library reports only for the years not surveyed by NCES.

Assessors usually count and compare data for these factors:

Gross size: count total volumes/titles/pieces held;

Category size: count holdings by areas such as monographs, serials, or
                              other formats; or

Growth size: measure the rate of growth by counting volumes or titles
                              added annually and subtracting volumes or titles weeded
                              annually.

Baseline Data

Most gross numbers are meaningless unless they support a comparison from which professional judgments about the collection can be offered. The library should develop and maintain its own set of baseline data to measure changes over time in relation to itself. With the increase in computerization, comparisons may be made

routinely for month-to-month, year-to-year, and month of year to same month for previous years.

Title and Volume Counts for an Electronic Environment

Libraries with automated systems are able to obtain title or volume counts from their systems. Each system is unique, but most offer the ability to count "monograph" as well as other cataloging categories: "serial," "recording," etc. These counts are only for items cataloged into the system and would not accurately reflect electronic resources licensed through aggregated databases by the library. At a minimum, most library assessments report the number of monograph and serial titles in the collection. Because library collections include resources made available in electronic formats, special consideration must be given to including these in the assessment report if they are subscribed to and are not part of an aggregated database.

Monograph and serial title counts should include licensed electronic books and electronic serials because online access is widely accepted as a method of information delivery. Digital resources are equivalent to print materials if their access is equal to print access (including charts and graphics), the information comes at no cost to the patron, and patrons have access to a sufficient number of terminals and lines in the library. To report titles, a monograph or serial title would be counted once regardless of how many formats (print, electronic, microform) are held by the library. To report volumes, extra "copies" of licensed electronic books or serials would be counted the same as copies held in print. A caveat for this count is that electronic "volumes" have a different impact from print volumes when predicting space needs as part of the

assessment report. An accepted practice is for assessment data to differentiate between the number of titles or volumes held in digital format along with the number held in print and microform.

A special caution is warranted for titles accessed via aggregated databases. While these are important resources in terms of assuring access to needed information, the library has little control over the specific titles in an aggregated database. Titles and their backfiles may disappear suddenly without notice. If the assessor wishes to include these titles in data collected for the report, care must be taken to acknowledge that the library is serving primarily as a conduit to these titles without any guarantee that the title mix is stable.

Comparisons with Numbers of Titles Published: Monographs

Some library systems can also provide data for the numbers of items added to the catalog for a given time period. If the library uses a book jobber, most can report the numbers of monographs supplied to the library by subject category. There is a difference in the number of items cataloged (which may include gifts, direct orders, and titles not available from the jobber) and the number of items supplied by the jobbers (which will not include materials acquired from other sources). In using these data to compare to other sources, the assessor must take care to compare similar data.

If cataloging has kept pace with acquisitions, assessors frequently compare the number of titles added in a subject field to the data reported annually in the *Bowker Annual of Library & Book Trade Information* with the most recent compilation also available at <http://www.bookwire.com>. *Bowker Annual* reports statistics for the

numbers of titles published annually by broad subject categories. These categories and the inclusion of titles not suitable for an academic library may limit the usefulness of these data for comparison.

Several companies offering approval plans for academic libraries provide management reports with similar statistics about rates of scholarly publication and net cost and average cost per volume. In an approval plan, a library vendor supplies books on approval to the institution. The institution keeps those it wishes to purchase. Carefully constructed profiles of the institution's collecting policy enable the company to select which books will be sent on approval. Since the vendors handle a broad range of scholarly materials for their various customers, they are able to collect statistics related to the level of scholarly publication in many fields.

Approval plan management reports provide timely information on the publication of scholarly titles by subject(s). Most companies offer their general approval plan reports for no charge to libraries participating in their approval plan programs. Some make their general approval plan reports publicly available, either in print or on their Web sites. In general, these reports list the number of titles selected for treatment in the approval plan program. The listing may be arranged under a variety of subjects, may be in more detail than in the *Bowker Annual*, and may include average list price data as well. These reports should be used carefully since profiles for each plan may include materials not suitable for the institution's curriculum, and this may affect the applicability of the statistics. If sufficient in-house data exist, the assessor can use the reports to gauge the level of acquisitions made by the library. This can be

expressed as a percentage of available publications, e.g., the library acquired 65 percent of the scholarly materials published in the field in a given year. In addition, several years of reports may be used to determine rate and trends of publishing in a field. These numbers can be projected to future years and used to estimate rate of publication, estimate cost to maintain the collection at the desired level, track price trends for budget planning, and even estimate future shelf space requirements.

Approval plan customers may also receive a custom report that compares their acquisition activities to the general data. Some companies offer customized cost and coverage estimates for potential approval plans, retrospective searches providing title lists by specific subjects, or even "core lists" by topic or type of library. These may be useful after the assessment report is completed to assist in writing a collection development plan with cost estimates.

Comparisons with Numbers of Titles Published: Serials

Two serials subscription agents provide data for articles published annually in the library literature. EBSCO Subscription Services data are used for the article published in the April 15 issue of *Library Journal*. Divine/Faxon provide data for the *American Libraries* coverage, usually in May. The articles include a narrative analysis of trends and helpful tables with information such as number of titles published by discipline, average prices for titles by discipline, cost history by subject and country of origin, and percentage of change in prices by subject. These data can help project costs to correct weaknesses found by an assessment.

Comparisons of Acquisition Rates

For large academic libraries, the Voigt formula establishes an acquisitions rate for collecting current materials (Voigt). The formula for acquisition rates can be used to estimate the needed number of acquisitions of currently published items; this rate then can be compared to actual acquisitions. The formula model was designed for "general universities with extensive advanced graduate (Ph.D.) programs in a definable and broad array of fields" (Voigt 266). Using this formula can also provide a means to estimate the budget amount needed to sustain the collection at the desired level.

Data from Local Automated Systems

Capabilities of automated library systems to provide collection management data vary, but most provide collection management reports easily and routinely. Information in these collection management reports often include:

- Number of titles by classification range
- Number of titles in a subject displayed as a percent of total holdings
- Average age of titles
- Circulation of titles in a subject range as a percent of total circulation
- List of titles that have not circulated in a given time period
- List of titles that have circulated most frequently in a given time period
- Number of titles added to the database in a given time period

If the automated system also supports accounting and acquisitions functions, the data may correlate financial data with rate of acquisitions or circulation by subject ranges. These data provide the assessor with information for judgments about expenditures and use.

The assessor should work to define clearly the kinds of data that will be useful in managing the collection, to review several test reports to assure that the data are

correct, and then routinely to review these to assist with collection decisions. Care should be taken to insure that the amount of data in the reports is manageable and not so voluminous that it is difficult to interpret or use.

Library systems reports can greatly assist the assessor in making collection management decisions. Information about the relative age of materials or their use over time can inform collection policy as well as specific title-by-title decisions. In reviewing routine reports, the assessor should watch for trends and compare recent reports with baseline reports. Caution should be exercised to avoid basing long-term decisions on short-term data.

Database Use Reports

Most database vendors and aggregators provide their customers with reports detailing databases' use by authorized users. The quality and usefulness of these reports vary greatly. The International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) adopted *Guidelines for Statistical Measures of Usage of Web-Based Information Resources* (1998 with a revision in 2001) to encourage companies to standardize the data they report. Librarians licensing databases should require their vendors to meet these guidelines. Among the data elements that vendors should provide are: number of sessions; number of queries or searches; and number of full-text units examined, downloaded, or otherwise supplied to users. Most reports are generated online by the customer using an interactive session and can be set for specific time periods such as month, quarter, year, or even multiple years. Some vendors provide aggregated use data as well as reports on use title-by-title.

Every assessor should become familiar with the reports available for the library's databases, collect these routinely to assure baseline and trend data are available, and analyze the reports to assist with collection assessment.

Serial Jobbers Reports

Most serials jobbers can generate reports for their customer's current subscriptions. Anyone conducting a collection assessment should contact the jobber to determine what reports might be available. Commonly available reports include lists of the library's subscribed titles in major indexing titles, e.g. *MedLine* or *Education Index.* Using these reports can save time by not having to check the list in-house. Also, these reports may provide an exceptions list, or those titles indexed but not subscribed by the library. These lists, which usually include cost information, can be helpful in planning strategies to correct deficiencies. The usefulness of these reports is limited to current print subscriptions. No information is available about electronic journals or serials backfiles.

A report produced by EBSCO analyzes the relative strength of the journal subscriptions as compared to the titles covered by a particular index or within a defined classification or subject area. The report lists all print titles ordered through EBSCO sorted by classification, subject term, or index code. Information is provided regarding publisher, country of origin, language of publication, whether or not the journal is peer reviewed, codes for which indexing and abstracting services cover the journal, and price. Statistical data show the number of titles, average price per title, and collection strength as compared to all titles in the class, subject, or index. The report can be

produced relative to the subscribed titles or titles not subscribed to by a particular library.

"Historical Price Analysis" is another EBSCO report commonly used for budgeting but which has application for assessment. This report shows the average yearly increase over a five-year period and offers a title-by-title analysis of pricing trends by department, subject, publisher, or country. Statistical summary data include the annual and cumulative percentages of increase as well as the average cost to maintain a title in the collection. Sorting titles by highest percentage increase over the five-year period provides valuable information about pricing trends. This report also codes the indexing and abstracting services that include the title.

Serials jobbers reports do not provide information about the completeness of serial runs held by the library. To determine completeness of serial runs, the assessor should determine the number of volumes in the complete backfiles of the selected serials titles and the number of these volumes held by the library. Assessors must consider the availability of "volumes" in both current print subscriptions and licensed full text databases as well as backfiles available in print and electronically. Every assessor must be cautious in counting backfiles from aggregated databases because their titles are not stable and their backfiles are disappearing without notice. At best, the assessor will have a "snapshot" of information resources for the time the assessment is done but not an assessment that can be used historically.

Interlibrary Loan Transactions Reports

The Network of Alabama Academic Libraries has used a custom report from OCLC listing all serial titles from which its academic members had received at least two articles through interlibrary loan for the period August 1994 through July 1995. This list of 6,391 serial titles reflected the acquisition through interlibrary loan of 32,055 articles. Titles were ranked by the highest number of articles supplied; for example, NAAL libraries received 88 articles from each of two journals: *Journal of Herpetology* and *Nautilus.* By subject, 44 percent of the articles were requested from titles classified in science and technology and medicine.

OCLC custom reports can be supplied for individual libraries for both borrowing and lending requests. If the library decides to use custom reports, they should be ordered annually to compare use over time. Radical changes in subscriptions should be made with care because interlibrary loan data can be affected by a single assignment or a single researcher. The assessor should be aware that the OCLC data may be incomplete if the library also processes interlibrary loan requests in other ways (e.g. printed ILL forms mailed or faxed).

Many libraries use ILL management software that provides similar information. Most ILL software can report information about subjects and dates of items requested or borrowed. Assessors should routinely review interlibrary loan data, especially reports about materials borrowed by the library's users, to determine what materials are needed but not available in the library.

Analysis of Data

Absolute numbers do not, by themselves, reveal anything about quality. If a library collection has been carefully selected and maintained, the assumption is that a larger collection has a greater likelihood of including more desirable items needed by information seekers. Absolute numbers can be compared to numbers representing other library collections or with the library's own historical data for longitudinal studies. Caution must be taken in interpreting such comparative data, however, because classification practices vary among libraries and even vary over time in the same library.

Analysis of data depends on its intended use. Another factor will be how varied the field is in terms of the ranges of classification numbers used for it. The number of titles reported may be compiled as one total for the entire field or may be maintained as separate counts for each subfield. The assessor will need to select the most useful statistic.

Using Statistics For an Assessment

Many evaluation techniques rely on statistical sampling. The assessor will need to know how to determine a sample size, use a random number table, and create a sample. A basic statistics textbook can explain these procedures. Textbooks generally include tables of random numbers. Another valuable resource for library staff in developing the sampling procedures will be other faculty who have expertise in using statistics. Most will be glad to assist in developing the sampling procedures.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT DATA
USEFUL FOR AN ASSESSMENT

For Further Reading

Methodology

Doll, Carol and Pamela Patrick Barron. *Collection Analysis for the School Library Media Center: A Practical Approach.* Chicago: American Library Association, 1991.

Hernon, Peter. "Research Notes: Determination of Sample Size and Selection of the Sample: Concepts, General Sources, and Software." *College and Research Libraries* 55 (March 1994): 171-179.

Van House, Nancy; Beth Weil, and Charles R. McClure *Measuring Academic Library Performance: A Practical Approach.* Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, ALA, 1990.

Voigt, Melvin J. "Acquisition Rates in University Libraries." College and Research Libraries 36 (July 1975): 263-271.

Other Resources

Bowker Annual of Library & Book Trade Information. New York: R. R. Bowker, annual. Recent compilations of "American Book Production Statistics" and "Canadian Book Production Statistics" are available at <http://www.bookwire.com>.

International Coalition of Library Consortia. *Guidelines for Statistical Measures of Usage of Web-Based Information Resources* <http://www.library.yale.edu/consortia/>.

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/> and *NCES Academic Library Peer Comparison Tool* < http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/academicpeer/>

North American Title Count, 2001. Chicago: Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, ALA, 2002 (CD-ROM). Previously known as *National Shelflist Count*, 1989, and *National Title Count*, 1990. 1997 (ISBN 0-8389-7985-8) may be purchased for $185.00 from ALA Order Fulfillment, 155 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60606.

For Further Reading, *continued*

Shim, Wonsik, Charles R. McClure, Bruce T. Fraser, and John Carlo Bertot. "Data Collection Procedures for Performance Statistics and Measures." Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2001. <http://www.arl.org/stats/newmeas/emetrics/phase3/ARL_Emetrics_Data_Collection_Manual.pdf>.

Data from Approval Plans and Serials Jobbers

Approval Coverage (compiled annually by Yankee Book Peddler for titles supplied via the approval plan program. Some back years are archived). Available online <http://www.ybp.com/approvalcoverage.01.htm>.

Coverage and Cost Study (compiled annually for titles supplied via the approval plan program). Available in print from Blackwell's Book Services or online at <http://www.blackwell.com/level4/CoverageandCostIntro.asp>.

An annual article in the April 15 issue of *Library Journal* reports on serials costs and trends. Data are retrieved from EBSCO Subscription Services.

An annual article in American Libraries, usually May, reports periodicals price index and serials prices and trends. Data are retrieved from Divine/Faxon. Beginning with the 2002 reports, all charts and historical data will be available on American Libraries' Web site. The complete periodical reports can be found at <http://www.ala.org/alonline/archive/periodicals02.html>, while the complete serials report is at <http://www.ala.org/alonline/archive/serials02.html>.

To inquire about ordering reports, contact the library's book jobbers and serials subscriptions agents.

WLN Conspectus

WLN and OCLC have merged. Articles about using the WLN Conspectus can provide insight into assessment strategies and data interpretation. The WLN Conspectus is an adaptation of the RLG Conspectus methodology for libraries other than research libraries, and these articles provide insight in the use of the conspectus methodology in those settings.

For Further Reading, *continued*

Olson, Georgine N. and Barbara McFadden Allen. "Cooperative Collection
      Management: The Conspectus Approach." *Collection Building* 13/2-2 (1994). This
      special issue contains four articles about the WLN Conspectus:

      Olson, Georgine, "WLN Conspectus: An Introduction"
      Loken, Sally, "The WLN Conspectus"
      Powell, Nancy. "Using the WLN Conspectus in a Non-Automated Environment
      Pinnel-Stephens, June "Shared futures: Cooperative Collection Development
      and Management in Alaska.

OCLC Custom Reports

To inquire about ordering a report, contact OCLC, 6565 Frantz Road, Dublin, Ohio
      43017-3395 or by telephone 1-800-848-5878.

CHAPTER 3

COLLECTION-CENTERED ASSESSMENT

Collection assessment methodologies are generally described as collection-centered or user- or client-centered measures. Collection-centered methodologies focus on comparing the collection to an "ideal" collection and generally use number of items (titles, volumes) to assist with the evaluation. User-centered methodologies focus on the current patrons of the library. These methodologies may evaluate data from circulation systems, databases, and interlibrary loan transactions. User-centered methodologies may also evaluate patrons' perceptions of adequacy by surveying patrons and convening focus groups.

Some libraries may rely on expert appraisal. An expert completing a collection assessment generally will draw on the techniques above. Using an expert has the advantage of adding professional judgment to the data considered in the evaluation.

With a collection-centered assessment, assessors should consider using any of the three assessment methods reviewed here: list checking, citation analysis, and expert appraisal. Any of these methods can be enriched by the growing availability of collection management data from library systems, databases, book jobbers, and serials subscriptions agents.

Method 1: List Checking

List checking is commonly used for evaluating library collections. List checking is time-consuming and tedious but is a widely accepted methodology for assessing the quality of a collection relative to the quality of a list used.

Advantages

1.   Comprehensive and specialized lists are available.

2.   Lists are often backed by the authority of expert selectors and/or editors.

3.   Many lists are updated regularly.

4.   A list can be compiled to meet an immediate assessment need if a published, up-to-date, authoritative list does not exist.

5.   The techniques for list checking are easy to administer and can be carried out by clerical or student personnel.

6.   The results of list checking provide information that can be used for acquisitions to strengthen the collection.

Disadvantages

1.   A list may have been used as a selection aid and should not be used for evaluation.

2.   Lists may be biased by the opinion of the expert selector or editor and may not accurately reflect the needs of the library users.

3.   Lists may not be up-to-date and recommended titles may be out-of-date or superseded by better works.

4.   Lists developed in-house require a great deal of time and expertise to compile.

5.   List checking is tedious and time-consuming.

6.   Equally good or better works may be in the collection but not included on the selected list. Limiting an assessment to one or more lists reveals nothing about holdings that are not on the list.

Types of Lists

Many types of lists are available. If you cannot readily identify a suitable list,

subject bibliographers in other libraries may have suggestions. In general, most lists

may be classified into one of several types.

Standard Bibliographies: Bibliographies such as *Books for College Libraries* and *Guide to Reference Books* (Balay), with updates published annually in *College and Research Libraries*, have been used widely as buying guides and evaluative checklists. Most of these bibliographies recommend holdings for a basic undergraduate library and would be useful for assessing an undergraduate level program. While these are updated regularly, care must be exercised in noting later works which supersede any editions in the bibliography.

Bibliographic Guides: Numerous bibliographic guides list standard titles that form a core collection. Two examples are *Literary Research Guide: An Annotated Listing of Reference Sources in English Literary Studies* and *Information Sources in Science and Technology.* Many such guides are listed in *Guide to Reference Books* and its supplements. Assessors should review the guides' introductions carefully to determine the intended audience. This will help assure the titles used for the assessment are appropriate to the purpose of the collection.

Catalogs of Important Collections: Libraries with outstanding and distinguished collections in certain fields often allow the publication of their catalogs. Increasingly, these libraries' current catalogs may be viewed through public access catalogs on the Internet. If they have converted all of their bibliographic records to electronic format, records for their historical and current resources may be examined. These distinguished collections include a depth and breadth that is probably most suited to evaluation at the research level. The historical printed catalogs generally reproduce the catalog cards and may include author, title, and subject access points.

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Care must be taken in analyzing a percentage as a measure of adequacy since most of these collections represent intensive, scholarly collecting in a narrow subject and will not include acquisitions past the publication date of the catalog. Examples of printed catalogs are the *Catalogue of the Harvard University Fine Arts Library, the Fogg Art Museum* and the *Dictionary Catalog of the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Memorial Library of Social Work.*

Publisher's Lists: Publishers often provide lists of their current titles arranged by subject. These are not evaluative and merely reflect what is available from a particular publishing house. Some publishers jointly prepare lists which may appear more selective but in reality are not. In addition, reprint publishers may publish titles in a reprint series selected from a given subject. For example, the Da Capo Press distributes a publisher's catalog titled *Reprints of Music Classics.* This catalog of a single publisher lists items the publisher has selected for reprint and for sale. The quality of these lists varies. Some reprint publishers work with editorial boards or expert consultants to make available the best works in a field. Others may reprint titles without regard for quality. Another catalog, published annually for the American Library Association conference exhibits, includes titles selected by publishers from their currently available titles. The *Publisher's Book Exhibit* appears to be a selective list, but the criterion for inclusion is simply that the books are currently for sale. Book jobbers also frequently distribute lists of "recommended titles" from their stock. Blackwell's Book Services posts "Focus On" twice yearly (http://www.blackwell.com). These lists highlight timely topics and include forty to sixty titles recommended by the book jobber. Lindsay & Howes Booksellers, parent company of Yankee Book Peddler, annually posts

a core list of 1,000 titles that attempts to identify major works that will stand the test of time and are expected to be contained within good collections.

Current Lists Selected For Various Reasons: Lists of best books of the year, award-winning books, or books selected for a variety of other reasons are available. The usefulness of this kind of list is limited by the selection criteria as well as by how closely the purpose matches the curriculum needs of the new program. One example of a useful list is "Outstanding Academic Books and Nonprint Materials" published annually in the May issue of *Choice. Library Journal* annually publishes regular "best books" articles including best reference books, best science and technology books, best business books, and just "Best Books of *year.*" Several of these annual lists are useful to assess how effectively the collection development policies result in timely acquisition of well-regarded, currently-published titles.

Lists of Periodicals: The bibliographic guides and standard lists for some fields include recommended periodicals. Some periodical lists are available and may be arranged by one of several sequences: titles held by a library; titles kept and bound; titles by subject, language, region or other category; or titles covered by indexing or abstracting services. Lists drawn from an existing library collection are only as good as the collection they represent. Lists developed by expert selectors and/or editors are as authoritative as the list creators. Some lists are authoritative and can be used as evaluation tools while others must be used with care or not at all.

The standard bibliography for serials, *Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory* (*Ulrich's*), should be used with caution. *Ulrich's* is inclusive and does not evaluate

quality. Many titles listed under a subject are not appropriate for an academic library. However, *Magazines for Libraries* (Katz) is an evaluative list that identifies major titles in a subject. Because of limited coverage, the subjects available may not always match the definition of the collection being assessed.

Science Citation Index Journal Citation Report ranks journals by the number of citations to them that have appeared in journal articles. These rankings are developed from the Institute for Scientific Information publications, *Science Citation Index* and *Social Science Citation Index*, and the database *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*. The *Journal Citation Report* reflects only gross numbers of citations and is subject to bias where self-citation is practiced. The reports reflect wide usage and may not reflect local usage. There may not be a correlation between published citation counts and local use. Also, past use studies have never been validated as predictors of future use.

Lists of periodicals indexed in a major indexing or abstracting service have been used as an assessment tool. Examples include *Education Index*, *Sage Urban Studies Abstracts*, and *Metallurgical Transactions*. To be an effective evaluation tool, the list should be selective. No guidelines exist to determine what percentage of the total number of indexed titles a library should hold.

Authorized Lists: Core collections or recommended titles lists are prepared by some accrediting organizations, professional associations, and governmental agencies. These lists are primarily buying guides for a basic, core collection but may also serve as checklists to determine eligibility for accreditation. The assessor should check with the academic department to determine if such a list exists, either to use for evaluation or as

a buying guide if accreditation will be sought. The Alabama Commission on Higher Education will help identify the appropriate accrediting organization and help determine if a core list has been published by it. Lists of accrediting organizations are published by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

Lists Developed In-house: If a suitable list cannot be identified, the assessor may create an in-house list. Such a list should be developed in consultation with the academic department and, if possible, with the advice of a subject bibliographer for the field.

Other Lists: Electronic databases with a subject emphasis, such as the *MLA International Bibliography* can be used to create lists if no suitable list is available. The resulting lists will be as comprehensive or narrow as titles cited in the database. The *MLA International Bibliography* and *Current Research in Education* cite monographs and serials, but many electronic databases only index serials.

Procedures for List Checking

In order to select an appropriate list or lists for the collection evaluation, the assessor must know the characteristics of the literature of the field. It is helpful to consult with the faculty of the department and jointly determine a suitable list. The assessor needs to be as accurate as possible in delineating a list that reflects the curriculum needs of the academic program. A critical judgment will be made by the assessor in considering lists that marginally match the subject area being evaluated.

The quality of the assessment using this methodology can only be as high as the quality

of the list used.

The ideal list parallels the categories used to describe the characteristics of the

literature. Its citations should reflect diversity among:

1.   Monographs (all formats):
     a.   Retrospective and current materials
     b.   Primary sources
     c.   Secondary sources
     d.   Standard sets
     e.   Classics and critical editions
     f.   Reference works
2.   Serials (all formats):
     a.   Monograph series
     b.   Journals
     c.   Newspapers
     d.   Indexing/abstracting services

3.   Other Printed Materials:
     a.   Dissertations
     b.   Technical Reports
     c.   Patents
     d.   Government Documents
     e.   Proceedings

4.   Other Formats:
     a.   Audio-visual materials
     b.   Realia
     c.   Maps
     d.   Kits
     e.   Software
     f.   Electronic Databases
     g.   Internet Links

If the selected list is not available in the assessor's library, it can usually be

obtained from another library on interlibrary loan. It may be helpful to own a copy that

can be marked lightly in pencil if the list may be used later as a buying guide.

The assessor can choose between checking 100% of a list or drawing a random sample. If the list is short (less than several hundred entries) or is to be used as a buying guide, check the entire list. If the list is extensive and will not be used as a buying guide, or if time is short, use a random sample.

The actual checking of the list against the library holdings can be done by clerical staff or student assistants if they have had sufficient training. Guidelines should be developed in advance of the actual checking to determine when the library's holdings match the citations. Training should include making decisions relative to accepting later editions; reprints; critical editions; variations in imprint; print, microform, or electronic versions; and so forth. There should be some professional supervision and checking of work in progress to insure accuracy and efficiency.

An important consideration in list checking for serials is the completeness of the data it yields. While a list may identify recommended serials titles, the methodology should allow judgments relative to accessibility in print and through indexing and abstracting services or databases, availability of backfiles, and completeness of runs. If list checking is used for serials holdings, the assessor should evaluate both accessibility and availability.

Accessibility evaluates the degree of coverage of serials titles in indexes and abstracts. An important factor is how the library will consider the titles physically owned as well as electronic titles available via online access.

Availability evaluates the completeness of holdings for titles indexed and the exhaustiveness of the library's backfiles. Both electronic and print formats should be

used in determining holding completeness. Care must be taken when considering

current subscriptions and backfiles held in electronic format. The assessor will need to

know if the library's license guarantees access in perpetuity to the backfiles or if the

titles and its backfiles may disappear without warning from the database. For example,

titles available through companies such as JSTOR would be counted without hesitation

because the license provides access in perpetuity. However, long term availability of

titles from database aggregators would have to be carefully considered before any

collection recommendations could be made.

The assessor should also check the availability of serials in off-campus locations

and through resource sharing arrangements. This is especially important if adding new

titles will be recommended or if titles have been added recently without backfiles being

acquired. The *Union List of Serials*, available online via OCLC, includes holdings for

libraries that have contributed their local holdings records. Also, many libraries have

made their online catalogs available via the World Wide Web. These can be searched

for holdings, although searching multiple catalogs sequentially can be time-consuming.

Analysis of Data

The growth in the number of databases licensed by libraries has made it essential

to present data that represents the totality of information readily available to the user

but that differentiates between print and electronic formats that are not licensed in

perpetuity. The assessor should clearly distinguish titles held physically from titles

accessible electronically. In reporting completeness of serials runs, the assessor should

also note that some volumes may be available in print (paper or microform) with

others available electronically. If the only access for the titles is online, then this should be noted for both electronic books and electronic journals included in the assessment.

Results of list checking are usually reported as percentages supplemented by the number of titles on the list and the number held by the library. Neither raw numbers nor percentages, by themselves, reveal anything about quality or adequacy. The assessor must interpret results in terms of the goals and objectives for the library, collection level desired, and types of materials needed. Data may be displayed as tables or incorporated into text.

Consulting with the faculty to discuss the relevance of titles not held may be valuable in developing conclusions from the data. The faculty may want to stress current acquisitions over retrospective holdings, serials over monographs, or just the opposite. Their preferences in how the collection will be used by their students and for their own research can affect the conclusions drawn from the assessment and for developing policies that will govern additions to the collection.

Example of a Table Resulting from List Checking

Table 1
HARTFORD SCIENCE LIBRARY
RESULTS OF COLLECTION SURVEY: PHYSICAL SCIENCES

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	Total Entries	Library Holdings	Percent Held
GA	27	15	56%
GB	17	13	77%
GC	32	25	78%
Q	68	57	84%
QA	12	8	66%
QC	6	6	100%
GD	17	11	64%
QE	9	7	77%
Totals	188	142	75%

Source: *A Basic Collection for the Physical Sciences.* (New York: Not Real Press, 1991).

COLLECTION-CENTERED ASSESSMENT
LIST CHECKING
For Further Reading

Methodology

Doll, Carol. *Collection Analysis for the School Library Media Center: A Practical Approach.* Chicago: American Library Association, 1991.

Lockett, Barbara. Guide to the Evaluation of Library Collections. Chicago: American Library Association, 1989. Collection management and development guides: no. 2.

List Checking

Lancaster, F. W. *Measurement and Evaluation of Library Service.* Washington, D.C.: Information Resources, 1977. Chapter 5, "Evaluation of the Collection," includes an excellent discussion of list checking on pages 177-178. There is a newer edition, Baker, Sharon L. and F. Wilfrid Lancaster. *The Measurement and Evaluation of Library Services.* 2nd ed. Arlington, Virginia: Information Resources Press, 1991, but this older chapter is a clearly written and easily understand guide to the basic methodologies.

Tjarks, Larry. "Evaluating Literature Collections," *RQ* 12: (Winter 1972): 183-185.

Types of Lists

Balay, Robert, ed. *Guide to Reference Books.* 11th ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 1996.

Books for College Libraries. 3rd ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 1988.

Columbia University. *Dictionary Catalog of the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Memorial Library of Social Work.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1980.

Harner, James L. *Literary Research Guide: An Annotated Listing of Reference Sources in English Literary Studies.* New York: Modern Language Association, 2002.

Harvard University. *Catalogue of the Harvard University Fine Arts Library, the Fogg Art Museum.* Boston: G. K. Hall, 1971.

Hurt, C.D. *Information Sources in Science and Technology.* Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1998.

Katz, Bill and Linda Sternberg Katz. *Magazines for Libraries.* 8th ed. New York: R. R. Bowker, 1995.

Ulrich's International Periodicals Dictionary. New York: R. R. Bowker, annual.

H. W. Wilson Standard Catalog Series.

For background information on the value of checking *Books for College Libraries*, review:

Budd, John M. "The Utility of a Recommended Core List: An Examination *of Books for College Libraries*, 3rd ed." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 17 (July 1991): 140-44.

Many library selection journals publish "best" lists. These usually highlight "best" titles from those reviewed in the publication during the preceding year. *Library Journal* has a regular repeating series of best books for the year, business, science, government publications etc. *Booklist* publishes "Editors' Choice" an annual list of titles (books and media) recommended for public libraries. *Choice* presents bibliographic essays with recommended titles. These essays are not limited to new titles, but include "standard" titles in the field as well as new, recommended titles.

Journal Citation Reports

All of the following citation reports are available online through ISI Web of Science or in print.

Science Citation Index Journal Citation Report. Philadelphia: Institute for Scientific Information, annual.

Science Citation Index. Philadelphia: Institute for Scientific Information, bimonthly with annual cumulations.

Social Science Citation Index. Philadelphia: Institute for Scientific Information, issued three times a year.

Indexing and Abstracting Services

Education Index. New York: H. W. Wilson, monthly except July and August.

Sage Urban Studies Abstracts. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, quarterly.

Metallurgical Transactions. London: Institute of Metals, monthly.

For Further Reading, *continued*

Lists of Accrediting Agencies

"Nationally Recognized Accrediting Agencies," *U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education,* 14 February 2002. <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/accreditation/natlagencies.html> (26 February 2002).

      Lists regional and national accrediting agencie recognized by the U. S. Secretary of Education as reliable authorities concerning the quality of education or training offered by the institutions of higher education or higher education programs they accredit.

Specialized and Professional Accrediting Organizations," *Council for Higher Education Accreditation,* 24 January 2002. <http://www.chea.org/directories/index.cfm> (24 January 2002).

      Lists accrediting organization that meet CHEA eligibility standards that the majority of institutions or programs each accredits are degree-granting. These organizations were either recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA) or eligible for recognition by the commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA).

Method 2: Citation Analysis

The citation analysis methodology utilizes bibliographic entries cited in a scholarly work or other works such as bibliographies or indexing tools. In the absence of a suitable bibliography for list checking, citation analysis provides a means to "tailor" a list for the specific assessment. While it has been described as a collection-centered technique, it has also been called a simulated user methodology because it simulates the use one researcher made of the literature for research.

One company, Institute for Scientific Research, systematically analyzes journal citation patterns in science and technology. Findings are reported by ranking journals by the frequency with which they are cited. Some caution is warranted in considering "impact factor" as a definitive ranking of the importance of a journal to a local collection, because the data inherit the disadvantages of citation analysis methodology.

Advantages

1.   Lists are easy to develop and can be "tailored" for a specific purpose and program.

2.   The methodology is unobtrusive and easy to apply.

3.   The methodology is flexible because the assessor has great leeway in focusing the evaluation and designing the sample.

4.   It can be used with either monographs, serials, or a combination of both.

Disadvantages

1.   Application of the methodology is tedious and time-consuming.

2.   The technique only reflects a user group that uses research to publish.

3.   It is limited by the sources cited by the author; not all authors carefully cite all sources used.

4.   Abstracting and indexing services are usually excluded and secondary sources are under-represented.

5.   Citations may not be verifiable.

6.   Citations may be out-of-date.

Citation analysis may be limited by the author of the work being used to develop the sample list. If the author only cited a few "important" works but actually used more, this limits the coverage of the assessment. Some articles may cite only the resources available in the author's library; this may result in a sample that is not representative of the field. If the source document includes a large number of self-citations, these are typically excluded. If dissertations are the source of citations, classic titles in the field and statistical sources may be represented in a frequency greater than their relative importance. Source works focusing on criticism may have a disproportionate number of "negative" citations which would not be distinguished from positive references.

Citation analysis and list-checking share the disadvantage of out-of-date sample citations. Publications have a built-in time lag and some works cited may have been superseded, published in another edition, or reprinted. The assessor will need to decide how much weight or credit will be given when the library holdings do not match exactly the cited works and must determine when other works such as newer editions, reprints, etc. may be substituted for the work cited in the source document. The assessor must be cautious in substituting for classic works or critical editions.

Procedures for Citation Analysis

In citation analysis, the assessor selects a source or sources from which citations will be drawn. This source should be selected in consultation with the department and subject bibliographers to insure that it accurately reflects the program goals, curriculum content, and program level. Selection of the source document is a critical step for a successful assessment.

The selected citations to be used are checked against the holdings of the library. The assessor will need to decide if all the citations from the source will be checked or if a sample will be drawn. Standard statistical sampling methodology should be followed if a sample is used and several factors need to be considered:

1. Sample size -- Select a manageable sample that can be checked in a reasonable amount of time.

2. Sample content -- Decide what the sample should contain. Monographs, serials, other formats, and even unpublished sources are likely to be cited.

3. Sample duplication -- Some citations are likely to duplicate others. Decide if any weight will be given to the need for owning materials with a higher rate of citation.

4. Self citations -- Decide what weight will be given to self citing. A large number of citations may be to a relatively few number of sources by the author or to articles in the same journal. This issue also needs to be considered during the data interpretation and report writing phases of the assessment.

Decisions will also need to be made about cited materials that will not be included in the collection. For instance, if the library does not collect materials in foreign languages, the assessor might want to take the next item if the sample methodology draws an item in a foreign language. The same might be true for

unpublished materials (including dissertations) if these materials would not be collected by the library.

It is recommended that the assessor keep duplicate citations to serials in the sample because the library should own frequently cited materials. If multiple sources are used to draw the sample, the likelihood of duplicate citations is increased. Where possible, it is preferable to use a single source document. Because serials may not be held in complete runs, citations to different articles in duplicate serial titles should be included and checked.

Another procedural problem is unverifiable citations. Published works are not always cited accurately in published sources. The assessor will need to decide if the number of works not found in the collection warrants verification of citations and rechecking. If the number of items not held is small, this will probably not be necessary. However, when findings are reported, the number of unusable citations should be noted.

Because citation analysis checks entries used for research in a given field, it may not be the most appropriate technique for evaluating a collection intended to support teaching at the undergraduate level. Researchers do not usually cite the basic texts and standard works that would be familiar to other researchers. The methodology is, nevertheless, a valid tool for evaluating a collection intended to support upper level undergraduate, graduate work, and independent research.

Analysis of Data

The results of a citation analysis, like list checking, can be reported as a table or incorporated into text. If a table is used, the assessor should include the source of the citations, the total number available, the sample size, the number held, and the percentages this represents. Electronic and print (paper and microform) formats should be used in determining holding completeness. The assessor should also count journal backfiles provided by companies such as JSTOR.   A notation should be made if the data includes serials and books held in digital format. An additional note should describe any agreement between the library and the publisher for access to digital backfiles. If desired, the table can be broken down by digital formats and print/other formats. If some citations were not verifiable, the number of these should be noted. The assessor must interpret the meaning of these percentages.

Usage reports from indexing and abstracting databases often provide data that are comparable to a citation analysis. Reports may list titles for which citations were retrieved, but for which full text was not available. Reports may also list titles "retrieved" by providing data about the number of times an article was examined, including online viewing and downloads. These data can be useful for making recommendations about additions and cancellations to the library's print journal subscriptions.

COLLECTION-CENTERED ASSESSMENT
CITATION ANALYSIS
For Further Reading

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Stueart, R.D. and G.B. Miller, Jr., eds. *Collection Development in Libraries: A Treatise.* (Foundations in Library and Information Science, Vol. 10, Part B), Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1980.
Chapters by Shirley A. Fitzgibbons on "Citation Analysis in the Social Sciences," pages 345-372, and Kris Subramanyam on "Citation Studies in Science and Technology," pages 291-344, are useful.

Method 3: Expert Appraisal

There will be times when direct expert appraisal may be the preferred assessment technique. This technique requires an expert or experts – subject specialists, scholars in the field(s), librarians – to evaluate the collection. The report reflects the judgement of the consultant or consultants relative to the ability of the collection to support the new program. Such reports usually analyze the size, scope, depth, and significance of the collection. They may also include judgments relative to the physical condition of the collection.

The basic requirement for this technique is the identification and selection of a qualified expert since the results depend entirely on the experience and ability of the evaluator. The expert must be knowledgeable about the scholarly content of the subject taught in the new program and must have an in-depth knowledge of the subject to be assessed. An expert asked to consult should have no vested interest in the outcome of the report.

Expert appraisal has been used effectively with broad general programs of study which are likely to draw on a large portion of the total collection. An expert opinion, drawn perhaps from an accreditation visitation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, is a valid measure. The advantages and disadvantages of using expert appraisal as a methodology for collection assessment include:

<u>Advantages</u>

1.   The evaluation can usually be accomplished very quickly.

2.   This methodology does not require in-house expertise and does not require extensive in-house staff time.

3.   Expert appraisal can be used with any library collection or subject area.

Disadvantages

1.   Experts knowledgeable in a subject area are essential and may be difficult to identify.

2.   Materials not on the shelf may be missed.

3.   The methodology resides in the expert and may not follow quantitative methods that yield data useful for subsequent action.

Analysis of data

The expert should provide a written report supporting his or her opinion of the adequacy of the collection. The library should supplement this report with statistics such as gross size of the collection, rate of acquisitions, columns added in the field, and so forth. The library staff and the expert should prescribe any steps to be taken, if needed, to bring the collection to adequacy.

CHAPTER 4

CLIENT-CENTERED ASSESSMENT

Client-centered assessment, also called user-centered assessment, evaluates how the collection is used by library patrons. This type of assessment utilizes data from circulation records, interlibrary loan statistics, shelf availability studies, election databases, and faculty and student surveys. Compilation of data for client-centered assessment reports has been made easier by the application of technology to library procedures and the increased availability of use data from electronic resources.

Method 1 – Circulation Studies

This method assumes that the adequacy of the book collection is directly related to its use by students and faculty, and circulation records provide a reasonably typical depiction of collection use. Circulation records may include data from a library's automated systems as well as use data from electronic books.

Advantages:

1. Data are objective

2. Data may be helpful for deselection decisions

3. With a computer-based system, data are easy and inexpensive to compile

Disadvantages:

1. Data do not reflect use in the library of either circulating or non-circulating materials.

2. There is no way of knowing how the material was used

3. Value of the material is unknown

4.   Use is only a small part of the mission of research and archival libraries

Procedures for Circulation Studies

In circulation studies, the assessor must gather the necessary circulation records to evaluate a section of the collection. Circulation data are useful to determine what is being checked out, how often, and whether the particular section needs more books. These data can also be used to compare use by format, e.g. print and electronic formats of the same content. An assessor may also use circulation data to evaluate why books have not been checked out, such as elimination of academic programs, and to assist with deselection decisions.

Analysis of Data

The results of circulation studies can be reported as a table or incorporated into text.

Method 2 – Citation Reports

Citation studies are a variation on the checklist method. They are primarily used for research-level materials, such as the items needed if a department were adding a new graduate degree program.

Advantages:

1.   Relatively easy to conduct

2.   Illustrates changes in strength of a collection

Disadvantages:

1.   It is subjective

2.   Some disciplines do not lend themselves to citation studies

Procedures for Citation Reports

With citation reports, an assessor should use a sample of citations selected from appropriate research publications. These publications should be selected in consultation with the department and subject bibliographers to insure that it accurately reflects the program goals, curriculum content, and program level.

The sample may include works that are cited more than once, and these may represent works that draw on a body of important literature in a broader field.   The citations in the sample should be checked against the library's resources to determine how many are in the collection.   Format will not matter, so the assessor will treat print and electronic formats equally, taking into consideration whether an electronic journal is held by an aggregator or not.

Analysis of Data

The results of citation reports can be reported as a table or incorporated into text. If a table is used, the assessor should include the source of citations the total number available, the sample size, the number held, and the percentages this represents. If some citations were not verifiable, the number of these should be noted.

Method 3 – User Surveys

User surveys evaluate the opinions of the users as to whether the library meets their needs. It can utilize written or oral responses to predetermined questions.

Advantages:

1.   Surveys involve the community in decision making

2.   Surveys can be simple or complex

<u>Disadvantages</u>:

1.   Past experiences will affect responses

2.   Samples are not always random

3.   Volunteer respondents may not be representative of the user population

<u>Procedures for User Surveys</u>

Sometimes, a survey addresses why those who do not use the library are nonusers. If this is the case, the main question, for collection development purposes, is whether those patrons do not use the library because of its collection. Irrespective of the purpose of the survey, it survey should be given to a random sampling of students. The questionnaires can be given in print format or may be included on the library's home page. The data should then be compiled.

<u>Analysis of Data</u>

A survey design should result in data that can be analyzed. Open-ended questions may elicit excellent information, but that information may be difficult to evaluate. Alternately, closed-ended questions can yield measurable answers. To the extent possible, survey responses from large numbers of users should yield objective data which can be statistically analyzed. Surveys from smaller samples can include subjective responses because the amount of data to be analyzed will not be overwhelming. An assessor may want to consult a previous survey, such as the survey from the Lister Hill Library at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Method 4 – Shelf Availability Studies

Shelf availability studies are used to determine if an item presumed to be in the collection is available to the user. Items may not be in the collection because the library may not own the item, the item is missing or shelved incorrectly, the citation in the catalog may be incorrect, or a user erred in copying the location information or finding the item in its current location.

Advantages:

1.   Reports the failures of real users in finding materials

2.   Can be easily repeated

Disadvantages:

1.   Depends on the cooperation of users

2.   Does not identify the needs of nonusers

3.   Design and implementation is time-consuming and difficult

Procedures for Shelf Availability Studies

Shelf availability studies measure whether patrons have been able to find the items they were looking for. This may be done by giving "failure slips" to patrons as they enter the library or by questioning them as they leave to determine if they found the items they were seeking. This may also be done by an evaluator. A bibliography of items could be checked for library holdings, and held items could be checked against the library's shelves for availability.

Analysis of Data

If items cannot be found because of misshelving or errors in the catalog, changes can be made to improve accuracy in shelving and catalog maintenance. The results of shelf availability studies can be reported as a table or incorporated into text.

Method 5 – Analysis of Interlibrary Loan Statistics

Patrons' use of other libraries is not always apparent. A measurable method to determine such use is to analyze data from interlibrary loan, or ILL. Heavy use of ILL in a collection may show a collection issue.

Advantages:

1.   Data are easy to gather

2.   Items are known to be needed by patrons

Disadvantages:

1.   Users may go to another library rather than using interlibrary loan

2.   A few users may account for the majority of items borrowed through ILL.

Procedures for Analysis of Interlibrary Loan Statistics

Interlibrary loan statistics should be reviewed periodically. This review may identify parts of the collection that do not meet the demands of the patrons.

Analysis of Data

The data may indicate new research staff or program needs. The results of analysis of interlibrary loan statistics can be reported as a table or incorporated into text.

CLIENT-CENTERED ASSESSMENT
For Further Reading

Beeler, M. G. Fancher; et al. *Measuring the Quality of Library Service: A Handbook.* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1974.

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CHAPTER 5

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT CATEGORIES

Serials

Among the problems facing many librarians today is the inability of most libraries to sustain existing collection levels for serials. The number of serial titles grows daily and the cost of subscriptions outpaces inflation. Library materials budgets are static, if not actually decreasing, as funding for libraries is reduced. In addition, new technology and the ability of publishers to deliver electronic information products require librarians to assess the best way to provide information while at the same time they must assess acquisitions on a title-by-title basis.

Librarians facing decisions involving serial subscriptions and the selection of alternatives such as electronic products or commercial document delivery services do not have a readily-available model to serve as precedent. Factors that collection assessors must consider in evaluating the serials component of a collection include:

S What is the relevance of this title to the library's mission (frequency of use, rating of value by faculty, frequency of citation in published research)?

S Does the library have a current subscription to the title?

S If the library does have a current subscription, is it print, digital, or both?

S Does the library have retrospective volumes and are these complete?

S Are the retrospective copies print or digital?

S Does the library have an agreement for access to digital backfiles in case of electronic subscription cancellation?

S Does the library retain and bind currently received issues?

S If the library does not retain issues, are they available from other sources?

S What is the extent of coverage by indexing and abstracting tools?

S What is the frequency of citation of articles from the title in other publications?

S What does the subscription cost?

S Is the title used?

S Will users have access to the content from other sources (electronic products, ILL, commercial document delivery) ?

Additional factors must also be considered if the library depends on other

sources for information to which it does not subscribe or retain issues.

Electronic Databases

In a library, electronic bibliographic databases are organized collections of

information in journals and books. Full-text databases have partial or complete texts of

works, while hybrid databases provide combinations of different types of records.

Questions to be asked when evaluating databases are:

S Does the database provide full-image of articles, and if not, is loss of image important?

S If the vendor rekeys any content information (e.g. to allow searching of tables), how is accuracy assured?

S How complete is coverage of each issue's content ?

S How extensive are backfiles?

S How current is the database (how soon after an issue is published will users find it in the database)?

S   What is the embargo period of the database (how soon after an issue is published will users find it in the database)?

S   What is the cost of the electronic database in relation to the cost to subscribe, bind, and maintain needed titles in the library?

S   What percentage of items retrieved by a search and available in electronic format will be relevant to the users of the library?

S   How long will the articles be archived by the vendor?

S   How stable is the content in the electronic product?

S   Is the electronic product vendor contractually bound to provide access to digital backfiles in case of subscription cancellation?

Commercial Document Delivery Services

A commercial document delivery service furnishes documents to a patron at a cost. A patron can purchase copies directly from the company or service, or interlibrary loan may purchase the copies and charge the fee to the patron. In determining whether a commercial document delivery service should be used, consider the following:

S   Is the source of the information reliable?

S   Is delivery dependable and timely?

S   Are extensive backfiles available and for how long?

S   Is the cost of acquiring individual articles reasonable in relation to the cost to subscribe, bind, and maintain the title in the library?

S   Is access affordable for all library users?

S   Can users afford the delay in receiving articles from an alternative service provider?

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT CATEGORIES
For Further Reading

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For Further Reading, *continued*

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Scigliano, Maria. "Serial Use in a Small Academic Library: Determining Cost-Effectiveness." *Serials Review* 26.1 (2000). Academic Search Elite, <http://www.ebscohost.com>.

Truesdell, Cheryl B. "Is Access a Viable Alternative to Ownership? A Review of Access Performance." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 20 (1994): 200-206.

Zipp, Louise S. "Core Serial Titles in an Interdisciplinary Field: The Case of Environmental Geology." *Library Resources & Technical Services* 43 (January 1999) 28-36.
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CHAPTER 6

COLLECTION LEVEL CODES

The Conspectus Model in Cooperative Assessment Projects

The lack of a common language to describe collections has been a traditional obstacle when preparing collection assessments. However, much work has been done by collection development officers to create a common language that can be used to describe collections in a meaningful and comparative way. The format for this work relies on the use of collection level codes which are assigned to rate subject collections relative to the universe of scholarly publishing in the fields. Descriptions of collection level codes developed by the Research Libraries Group and adapted by other groups such as the Western Library Network, the American Library Association, and the Indiana Coordinated Collection Development Program follow.

The Western Library Network Conspectus Method

The Western Library Network (WLN) developed software in the 1990s to allow librarians to create and/or maintain a local collection assessment database. It is based on the RLG conspectus, no longer in use. It has been employed to assess collection strengths in University libraries in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. The WLN Conspectus format is either a printed workbook or an automated service. Like the RLG, it compares a library's collection in subject areas with the library's ability to purchase in that field. It also examines the collection goals for a subject area based on the university's current programs. Unlike the RLG conspectus,

the WLN conspectus is designed for all types and sizes of libraries and both Library of Congress and Dewey classification systems.   The collection level may be assessed by comparing the library's holdings to other libraries, standard bibliographies, indexes and periodical lists, or citation reports. The assessments for collection level (CL), acquisitions commitment (AC) and goal level (GL) are expressed using a scale from 0 (out of scope) to 5 (comprehensive). Assessors may want to review the handbook, *Using the Conspectus Method: A Collection Assessment Handbook* for background and guidance. *Using the Conspectus Method* provides a step-by-step process for collection assessment.

To assess a library collection using the WLN Conspectus methodology, review the WLN collection level that best describes the collection level needed for the academic program. For example, a collection rated Level 3 is intended to support undergraduate and most graduate instruction. A Level 4 collection would be needed to support research for a program offering a Ph.D. and supporting other independent research. The methodology requires that the assessor assign a rating for the existing collection level, or the strength of the collection at the time it is assessed. In addition, an assessor assigns current acquisitions commitment, or the level at which additions are being made to the collection. These ratings may not be the same. For example, if an institution adds a new academic program, it may have an existing collection strength of Level 2, but may be buying at a level consistent with acquisitions for Level 3. In assigning values for existing collection strength and current collecting intensity, it is important to bear these points in mind:

S   These values describe collections or collecting policies ABSOLUTELY, not relatively. They assume a national perspective and a broad cognizance of all facets of collecting. It is not appropriate to designate a Level 4 because the collection is strongest in the region. The Level 4 rating should reflect strength in relation to scholarly research.

S   When the value describes the collection level, it should reflect what is actually on the shelves.

S   When the value describes the acquisition commitment, it represents actual current collecting practices, and not policy, if that policy is being imperfectly observed.

Language Codes

Ratings of collection levels are qualified by language codes. These codes are used in conjunction with collection intensity indicators to signify language priorities and limitations governing collecting policies. Although English is the primary language for scholarly materials in many fields (e.g., computer science), the absence of foreign language materials may alter the scope and breadth of a collection. The use of language codes allows these differences to be reflected. Language qualifiers used to indicate the variety and scale of language coverage are:

P   Primary language of the country predominates with little or no other language material.

S   Selected other language material included in addition to the primary language material

W   Wide selection of languages represented.

X   Material is mainly in one language other than the primary language of the library and country.

D   Dual languages or two primary languages predominate with little or no other language material

Collection Depth Indicator Definitions

These codes are used for assessing collection level, acquisition commitment, and collection goal. The whole numbers include the subdivided codes in that level. The information below is taken from the *WLN Collection Assessment Manual* and the OCLC Lacy Product Center ACAS Web site.

0   **Out of Scope:** The library does not collect in this subject.

1   **Minimal Level:** A subject area in which few selections are made beyond very basic works.

> **1a**   **Minimal Level, Uneven Coverage**: Few selections are made; there is unsystematic representation of the subject.

> **1b**   **Minimal Level, Even Coverage:** Few selections are made; basic authors, some core works, and a spectrum of ideological views are represented.

2   **Basic Information Level:** A selective collection of materials that serves to introduce and define a subject and to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere. It may include dictionaries, encyclopedias, access to appropriate bibliographic databases, selected editions of important works, historical surveys, bibliographies, handbooks, and a few major periodicals.

> This level supports the needs of general library users through the first two years of college.

> **2a**   **Basic Information Level, Introductory:** The emphasis at this level is on providing resources that introduce and define a subject. A collection at this level includes basic reference tools and explanatory works, such as textbooks, historical descriptions of the subject's development, general works devoted to major topics and figures in the field, and selective major periodicals.

> This level support the general public and students through high school attempting to locate general information about a subject.

> **2b**   **Basic Information Level, Advanced:** At the advanced level, basic information about a subject is provided on a wider range of topics and with more depth. There is a broader selection of basic explanatory works,

historical descriptions, reference tools, and bibliographic databases, a selection of editions of important works and a greater quantity and variety of materials is typical.

This level supports the basic informational and recreational reading needs of an educated general public or students through the first two years of college

3   **Study or Instructional Support Level:** A collection that is adequate to impart knowledge about a subject in a systematic way but at a level of less than research level. The collection includes a wide range of basic works in appropriate formats, a significant collection of classic retrospective materials, complete collections of the works of more important writers and selections from the works of secondary writers, a selection of representative journals and appropriate machine-readable data files, and the reference tools and fundamental bibliographic apparatus pertaining to the subject.

This level supports the needs of general library users through college and beginning graduate instruction.

3a   **Basic Study or Instructional Support Level:** The basic subdivision of a level of collection provides resources adequate for imparting and maintaining knowledge about the primary topics of a subject area. The collection includes the more important works of primary and secondary literature, a selection of basic representative journals/periodicals, subject-specific indexes, and the fundamental reference and bibliographical tools pertaining to the subject.

This level supports undergraduate courses, as well as the independent study needs of the lifelong learner.

3b   **Intermediate Study or Instructional Support Level**: The intermediate division of a level 3 collection provides resources adequate for imparting and maintaining knowledge about the basic or primary topics of a subject area. The collection includes a broad scope of basic works in appropriate formats, classic retrospective materials, all key journals on primary topics selected journals and seminary works on secondary topics, access to appropriate machine-readable data fields, and the reference tools and fundamental bibliographical apparatus pertaining to the subject.

This level supports upper division undergraduate courses.

3c **Advanced Study or Instructional Support Level:** The advanced subdivision of level 3 provides resources adequate for imparting and maintaining knowledge about the primary and secondary topics of a subject area. The collection includes a significant number of seminal works and journals on the primary and secondary topics in the field; a significant number of retrospective materials; a substantial collection of works by secondary figures; and works that provide more in-depth discussions of research, techniques, and evaluation.

This level supports master's degree level programs and other specialized inquiries.

4 **Research Level:** A collection that includes the major published source materials required for doctoral and independent research, including materials containing research reporting, scientific experimental results, and other information useful to researchers. It is intended to include all important reference works and a wide selection of specialized monographs, as well as an extensive collection of journals and major indexing and abstracting services in the field. Important foreign language materials are included. Older materials is usually retained for historical research and actively preserved.

This level supports doctoral study and original independent research.

5 **Comprehensive Level:** A collection in which a library endeavors, so far as is reasonably able, to include all significant works of recorded knowledge (publications, manuscripts, etc.) in all applicable languages, for a necessarily defined and limited field. This level of collection intensity is one that maintains a "special collection." The aim, if not the achievement, is exhaustiveness. Older material is retained for historical research with active preservation efforts.

This level serves as a national or international resource

In the WLN Conspectus methodology, an assigned value of 3cS/3cS in a subject field would mean that existing collection strength and current collecting intensity are the same and that the collection is capable of supporting undergraduate and most graduate level work. Further, the existing collection includes selected foreign language materials and collecting continues at this level. A value of 2bP/3cS would indicate that the existing collection is at the basic information level with predominately English

language materials. The current collecting intensity, however, is for a collection to reach a level adequate to support graduate education. Acquisitions would include selected foreign language materials.

American Library Association Guidelines

The Resources and Technical Services Division of the American Library Association has drafted descriptive codes for use in identifying existing collection strength and current collecting intensity. These guidelines are a modified and expanded adaptation of the definitions developed by the Research Libraries Group and an Alaska library consortium which includes libraries of all types.

0   **Out of Scope:** The library does not collect in this area.

1a   **Minimal, with uneven coverage:** Unsystematic representation of subject.

1b   **Minimal, but chosen well:** Few selections are made but basic authors, core works, and ideological balance are represented. Can support the most fundamental school, public, and academic library inquiries. For school and public libraries, would include toys, manipulative objects, and other three-dimensional objects.

2a   **Basic information level:** A collection of up-to-date general materials that serve to introduce and define a subject and to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere. It may include dictionaries, encyclopedias, historical surveys, bibliographies in print format or available through online databases, and periodicals, audio-visual material, and software in the minimum number and range of coverage that will serve the purpose. A basic information collection can support school instruction and routine public inquiries, but is not sufficiently intensive to support higher level academic courses or independent study or the wide-ranging recreational reading demands of a highly-educated general public.

2b   **Augmented information level:** As above, except a few major periodicals, selected editions of important works, wider selection of reference materials.

3a   **Basic study level:** Includes the most important primary and secondary literature, a selection of basic representative journals/periodicals, and the fundamental reference and bibliographical tools pertaining to the subject. Adequate for independent study, for advanced secondary school education, and for the lifelong learning needs of the general public, with coverage at all appropriate reading levels.

3b   **Intermediate instructional level:** As above, except a wider range of basic monographs, wider selection of the more important writers and secondary

materials, stronger journal/periodical support, and additional non-print material germane to the subject. Collection adequate to support term paper writing at the undergraduate or junior college level.

3c   **Advanced instructional level:** As above, except adequate to support the course work of advanced undergraduate and master's degree programs, or sustained independent study; adequate to maintain knowledge of a subject required for limited or general purposes, but not strong enough for original research in a subject. It includes complete collections of the works of the important authors, selections from the works of secondary writers, a selection of representative journals/periodicals, and all the reference tools and fundamental bibliographic apparatus pertaining to the subject. Access to software and computer applications may be required, particularly in technical, scientific, and quantitative fields.

4   **Research level:** A collection that includes the major published source materials required for dissertations and independent research, including materials containing research reporting, new findings, scientific experimental results, conference and symposia proceedings, and other information useful to researchers regardless of format or physical medium. It is intended to include all important reference works and a wide selection of specialized monographs, as well as a very extensive collection of journals and major indexing and abstracting services in the field or access to their electronic equivalents. Older material is retained for historical research.

5   **Comprehensive level:** A collection in which a library endeavors, so far as is reasonably possible, to include all significant works of recorded knowledge (publications, manuscripts, other forms), in all applicable languages, for a necessarily defined and limited field. Holdings of artifacts, analogous to a museum collection, or archival collections, if present, should be indicated in scope notes. This level of collecting intensity is one that maintains a "special collection;" the aim, if not the achievement, is exhaustiveness.

Indiana Coordinated Collection Development Program

A coordinated collection development program for libraries in Indiana is based on the RLG Conspectus. The Indiana project has expanded the RLG Conspectus guidelines for use with collections other than research level. This expansion is included to help clarify the level codes.

Each succeeding collection level is presumed to be inclusive of those which precede it.

0   **Out of Scope:** The library does not collect in this area.

1   **Minimal Level:** A subject area in which few selections are made beyond very basic works. Basic materials purchased include:

    a.   introductory textbooks, and

    b.   descriptive, concept-oriented works written for the interested layperson with little or no previous knowledge of the field.

    Reference materials include:

    a.   handbooks that define terms and describe the scope of the field, and

    b.   general dictionaries or encyclopedias.

2A   **Basic Information Level** - **Introductory:** A selective collection of materials that serves to introduce and define a subject and to delineate its major topics. The introductory level of a basic information collection is only sufficient to support introductory level courses and the beginning stages of independent study. The collection should offer an adequate base for students attempting to locate general information. Although it is not designed to provide support for all subtopics in subject areas, it should be comprehensive enough to support broad subject areas. It should include some basic materials that direct the user to other relevant information.

    The Basic Information Level collection should include all items listed as basic materials in level 1. In addition, it should include:

    a.   basic explanatory works, including selected text-books,

b. historical descriptions of the development of the subject,

c. general works devoted to major subtopics in the field, and

d. additional explanatory works about the theories, research, and other works of major figures in the field.

It should also include the basic reference sources mentioned in level 1 as well as most of the following: important bibliographies, handbooks, guides, directories, and encyclopedias or dictionaries that cover a range of disciplines within a subject area.

2B **Intermediate Instructional Level:** The intermediate instructional support level provides a basic introduction to the subject for a student in first and second year undergraduate courses sufficient to support all papers and class assignments. The intermediate level includes:

a. a selection of basic monographs and periodicals on the general subject as well as on subtopics covered in the undergraduate curriculum, and

b. a broader selection of works by important authors as well as works describing and evaluating their theories, research, and/or writing.

3 **Instructional Support Level:** This level supports advanced undergraduate and master's degree courses. The collection includes:

a. a broad range of monographs, serials, and other appropriate formats, and all the seminal works in the broad subject area and all major subtopics,

b. complete works of the most important authors in the native language or in English translation,

c. a substantial collection of works by secondary authors, and

d. works that describe or evaluate theories, research or writings of important authors.

Most of the important reference tools, including major periodical indexes, abstracts, and bibliographies are also included.

4   **Research Level:** A collection that includes the major published source materials required for dissertations and independent research, including materials containing research reporting, new findings, scientific experimental results, and other information useful to researchers. It is intended to include all important reference works and a wide selection of specialized monographs, as well as a very extensive collection of journals and major indexing and abstracting services in the field. Pertinent foreign language materials are included. Older material is retained for historical research.

5   **Comprehensive Level:** A collection in which a library endeavors, so far as is reasonably possible, to include all significant works of recorded knowledge (publications, manuscripts, other forms), in all applicable languages, for a necessarily defined and limited field. This level of collecting intensity is one that maintains a "special collection;" the aim, if not the achievement, is exhaustiveness.

The RLG Conspectus

Although the RLG Conspectus is no longer the primary method of collection

development for many libraries, its impact on other conspectuses is important, and

therefore it has been included in this handbook. In 1980, the Research Library Group,

Inc. initiated work to facilitate coordinated collection development among its members.

It created an online and printed tool, the RLG Conspectus, a detailed list of

approximately 5,000 subjects. They also developed a methodology for reporting data in

the Conspectus format. Members assess their collections and assign a code to describe

existing collecting strength and current collecting intensity. The RLG Conspectus is

widely used and its codes form the basis of the American Library Association

guidelines and codes developed by other cooperative collection development projects.

These codes range from 0 (out of scope) to 5 (comprehensive) and include additional

qualifiers for language.

The RLG Conspectus products are no longer available from RLG. Nevertheless,

the Conspectus models are on some university Web pages as a guide to their

collections. In order to understand the RLG Conspectus, it is essential that assessors

review the *Manual for the North American Inventory of Research Collections* by Jutta Reed-

Scott for background and guidance. The RLG Conspectus methodology provides a

uniform code for describing collections and for comparing collections among libraries.

To assess a library collection using the RLG Conspectus methodology, review the

RLG collection level that best describes the collection level needed for the academic

program. For example, a collection rated Level 3 is intended to support undergraduate

and most graduate instruction. Please note that the phrase "less than research

intensity" in the RLG Conspectus definition for Level 3 is interpreted as less than Ph.D.

research intensity. A Level 4 collection would be needed to support research for a

program offering the Ph.D. and supporting other independent research. The

methodology provides for the assessor to assign a rating for existing collection strength,

the level of the collection at the time it is assessed. In addition, assessors assign current

collecting intensity, the level at which acquisitions are being made to the collection.

These ratings may not be the same. For example, if an institution adds a new academic

program, it may have an existing collection strength of Level 2, but may be buying at a

level consistent with acquisitions for Level 3. In assigning values for existing collection

strength and current collecting intensity, it is important to bear these points in mind:

S   These values describe collections or collecting policies ABSOLUTELY, not
         relatively. They assume a national perspective and a broad cognizance of all
         facets of collecting. It is not appropriate to designate a Level 4 because the
         collection is strongest in the region. The Level 4 rating should reflect strength in
         relation to scholarly research.

S   When the value describes existing collection strength, it should relate to the
         national shelflist measurement and reflect what is actually on the shelves.

S   When the value describes current collecting intensity, it represents actual
         collecting practices, and not policy, if that policy is being imperfectly observed.

Language Codes

Ratings of collection level are qualified by language codes. These codes are used in

conjunction with collection intensity indicators to signify language priorities and

limitations governing collecting policies. Although English is the primary language for

scholarly materials in many fields (for example, computer science), the absence of

foreign language materials may alter the scope and breadth of a collection. The use of

language codes allows these differences to be reflected. Language qualifiers used to

indicate the variety and scale of language coverage are:

E English language materials predominates. Little or no foreign language material is in the collection.

F Selected foreign language material included in addition to the English language material

W Wide selection of material in all applicable languages. No programmatic decision is made to restrict materials according to language.

Y Material is primarily in one foreign language. The overall focus is on collecting material in the vernacular of the area.

Definitions of Level Codes

0 **Out of Scope:** The library does not collect in this area.

1 **Minimal Level:** A subject area in which few selections are made beyond very basic works.

2 **Basic Information Level**: A collection of up-to-date general materials that serve to introduce and define a subject and to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere. It may include dictionaries, encyclopedias, access to appropriate bibliographic databases, selected editions of important works, historical surveys, bibliographies, handbooks, and a few major periodicals. A basic information collection is not sufficiently intensive to support any advanced undergraduate or graduate courses or independent study in the subject area involved.

3 **Instruction Support Level:** A collection that is adequate to support under-graduate and MOST graduate instruction, or sustained independent study; that is, adequate to maintain knowledge of the subject required for limited or generalized purposes, or less than research intensity. It includes a wide range of basic works in appropriate formats, a significant number of "classic" retrospective materials, complete collections of the works of more important

writers, selections from the works of secondary writers, a selection of representative journals, access to appropriate non-bibliographic databases, and the reference and fundamental bibliographic apparatus pertaining to the subject.

4   Research Level: A collection that includes the major published source materials required for dissertations and independent research, including materials containing research reporting, new findings, scientific experimental results, and other information useful to researchers. It is intended to include all important reference works and a wide selection of specialized monographs, as well as a very extensive collection of journals and major indexing and abstracting services in the field. Pertinent foreign language materials are included. Older material is retained for historical research.

5   Comprehensive Level: A collection in which a library endeavors, so far as is reasonably possible, to include all significant works of recorded knowledge (publications, manuscripts, other forms), in all applicable languages, for a necessarily defined and limited field. This level of collecting intensity is one that maintains a "special collection;" the aim, if not the achievement, is exhaustiveness.

In the RLG Conspectus methodology, an assigned value of 3F/3F in a subject field would mean that existing collection strength and current collecting intensity are the same and that the collection is capable of supporting undergraduate and most graduate level work.   Further, the existing collection includes selected foreign language materials and collecting continues at this level. A value of 2E/3F would indicate that the existing collection is at the basic information level with predominately English language materials. The current collecting intensity, however, is for a collection to reach a level adequate to support graduate education. Acquisitions would include selected foreign language materials.

COLLECTION LEVEL CODES
For Further Reading

Reed-Scott, Jutta. *Manual for the North American Inventory of Research Library Collections.*
   Washington, D.C.: Association of Research Libraries, 1985.

NAAL Collection Assessment Manual. Montgomery: The Network, 1987. (ED 290-462)

White, Howard D. *Brief Tests of Collection Strength.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press,
   1995. Contributions in Librarianship and Information Science, number 88.

WLN Conspectus

Bushing, Mary, Burns Davis, and Nancy Powell. *Using the Conspectus Method: A
   Collection Assessment Handbook.* Lacey, WA: WLN, 1997.

"Collection Depth Indicator Definitions," *OCLC Lacey Product Center,* 2001,
   <http://www.oclc.org/western/products/aca/indicators-cdid.htm> (8 April
   2002).

"Language Coverage Indicator Definitions," *OCLC Lacey Product Center*, 2001,
   <http://http://www.oclc.org/western/products/aca/indicators-lci.htm> (8
   April 2002).

Powell, Nancy and Mary Bushing. *WLN Collection Assessment Manual.* Lacey, WA:
   WLN, 1992.

RLG Conspectus

Allen, Barbara McFadden: "RLG and NCIP Conspectus: A Brief Overview and
   Selected Bibliography?" in Olson, Georgine N. and Barbara McFadden Allen.
   "Cooperative Collection Management: The Conspectus Approach." *Collection
   Building* 13/2-2 (1994).

Gwinn, Nancy E. and Paul H. Mosher, Coordinating Collection Development: The RLG
   Conspectus," *College & Research Libraries* 44 (March 1983): 128-140.

"Collection Assessment and Verification Studies: Two Reports from the Research Libraries
   Group," *College & Research Libraries News* 46 (July/August 1985): 336-340.

For Further Reading, *continued*

Following are some university Web sites that explain their use of conspectus-based collection assessment:

Conspectus for Georgetown University Library: Collection Assessment for
      Departments, Programs, Divisions, and Centers of Study, *Georgetown University*
      Library: Collection Development Policy, April 2000.
      <http://www.library.georgetown.edu/dept/collect/policy/conspectus_toc.htm
      > (3 April 2002).

Conspectus of the Collection, *Vanderbild University Sarah Shannon Stevenson Science and*
      Engineering Library, October 2001*.*
      <http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/science/conspectus.html> (3 April 2002)

Conspectus Summary Report, *University of Michigan-Flint, Francis Willson Thompson*
      Library, 18 Feb. 1999.
      <http://www.flint.umich.edu/Departments/Library/consummary.html> (3
      April 2002).

RLG Conspectus Supplemental Guidlines to the Chemistry Division of the Physical
      Sciences Conspectus, *Stanford University Libraries,* 7 May 1998.
      <http://garamond.stanford.edu/depts/swain/chemcons.html> (3 April 2002).

More information on the OCLC WLN Conspectus software can be found at ACAS:

Automated Collection Assessment and Analysis Service, *OCLC Lacey Product Center*,
      2001. <http://www.oclc.org/western/products/aca/conspect.htm> (April 3,
      2002).

CHAPTER 7

PREPARING THE COLLECTION ASSESSMENT REPORT

The library component of a new program proposal is a written evaluative statement that describes the existing collection and evaluates its ability to support the proposed program. The report describes what will be needed for the collection to achieve and sustain the desired collecting intensity and defines the one-time and ongoing costs associated with that collection level.

The amount of detail in the report is determined by the assessor and is selected to support the evaluative judgments. In general, the report includes:

1.   An overview of the library

2.   A description of the existing and desired collecting levels

3.   A description of the subject field being assessed

4.   The results of the assessment

5.   An interpretation of the data supplied by the assessment

6.   A prescription of what will be needed to reach the desired collecting level

7.   A statement of one-time and ongoing costs associated with attaining and sustaining the collection at the desired level

The assessor may want to confer with the department faculty when initial interpretations of the data have been made. The faculty can help with the interpretation, insure that the description of the subjects and their use are correct, and assist in recommendations for achieving collection adequacy. An early conference with

the faculty can help prevent a surprised reaction to the written library component

report. A sample report for music therapy is included is at the end of this chapter.

Overview of the Library

Each library component usually begins with an overview of the library that will

support the program. This may be the main library or, in decentralized systems, a

departmental library. The overview should describe briefly the total holdings of

monographs, serials, and other special materials such as government documents,

microforms, or audio-visual materials. Electronic serials for which the library has a

subscription and books available electronically should be included in the total for either

books or serials; items in aggregated databases should be counted separately. If the

library is a member of a cooperative organization that has an impact on the collection

and access to materials, this should be noted. Participation in special projects which

strengthen the library's holdings or access to materials (such as union listing) may be

included.

If collections in other libraries will be used by the program's students, faculty,

and researchers, these collections should be described briefly in the overview.

Strengths and weaknesses of the collections should be included, as well as a description

of their accessibility to users. If they form an important part of the resources to be used

in the program, details should be incorporated into the data section of the report and

the results of any assessment included in the interpretive and evaluative portion of the

report.

Describing Collection Levels

The assessor should describe the existing collection level and the desired collection level needed to support the program. The WLN Conspectus, the American Library Association, or the Indiana Coordinated Collection Development Program collection level codes may be used. The letter code for language coverage should be included for both the existing and desired collection levels. If there are any other applicable library standards, identify and describe any of their recommendations which were used in the assessment.

Description of the Subject Field

The library component report should parallel the description of the subject field being evaluated. Organization and sequence of the information in this section are left to the assessor's judgment. In general, there should be an overview of the collection being evaluated, an indication of gross size, the primary and secondary subjects included, and the characteristics of the communication of knowledge in the field. To describe the primary and secondary subjects, some reports include an appendix of the classification numbers where material could be found for research in the field. While not an ACHE requirement, this is especially helpful if the subject draws from a large number of distinct fields. This listing would also be useful in stating an initial collection development policy for the subject.

Communication of Knowledge in the Field

The characteristics of scholarly communication in field should be described. Among the elements that will impact the assessment are reliance on monographs, serials, or other materials and dependence on current or retrospective materials. Some fields have a much broader scope of literature; for example, American literature has a much broader scope in comparison to computer science. The breadth of the field, as a characteristic of its literature, should be noted. Some disciplines rely more on scholarly publication; for example, Russian history has a different scope than mass communication, and this characteristic should be noted.

Reporting Results of the Assessment

Size of the Collection

The gross size of the collection should be reported as number of monograph titles, number of current serial subscriptions, and number of other special materials (such as documents or patents) which are important resources. The number of monographs may be obtained from an automated circulation system if the entire collection is loaded in the database or estimated from shelflist units if the library is not automated. Electronic serials for which the library has a subscription and books available electronically should be included in the total for either books or serials; items in aggregated databases should be counted separately, if at all.

In addition to gross size, the assessor may report rate of growth over the past several years if this statistic is readily available for the collection. If special emphasis

has been placed on purchases in any of the areas included in the collection, this should be noted. Descriptions of serial titles held should note retrospective coverage and the availability of complete runs versus recent subscriptions where retrospective volumes were not added.

If the subject being assessed draws on existing collections, the assessor may decide to evaluate only the new component. If that is the case, the report should identify the areas which were not evaluated and note their existing collection levels. The assessor should be able to state that these areas of the collection are adequate for the proposed new program.

Interpretation of Data Collected

Each assessment methodology selected and its application for this assessment should be described. If list checking was used, identify the list used and the rationale for its selection. If citation analysis was used, identify the source of the citations and the rationale for its selection. Report the number of citations actually checked and any variations such as deleting foreign language or unpublished materials from the checking. If a sample was used, report the sample size. If a consultant was used, documentation of the expert's background and experience should be included along with the consultant's report.

It is helpful to report and interpret separate findings for monographs, serials, other printed materials and materials in other formats. Electronic serials for which the library has a subscription and books available electronically should be included in the

total for either books or serials; items in aggregated databases should be counted separately. The discussion of findings should include the rate of success for holdings checked. Based on the characteristics of the literature, the strength of current and retrospective holdings should be discussed. If notable holdings (such as key sets of monographs or long runs of serials) are identified, the discussion should include a judgment of their importance. In identifying serials to be added, the report should note not only new subscriptions but additions to backfiles for both new and currently-held serials.

Since every library cannot be expected to own every needed item, the assessor may wish to substitute access of ownership in some classes of materials. The location of these materials and their availability to users should be noted. Since there are barriers to use when materials are located off-site, these should be noted. Access is especially valuable if formal resource sharing arrangements are operable which supplement traditional interlibrary loan arrangements.

While most of the assessment tools used will include some materials classified as reference, the strengths of reference materials in providing access to the collection should be discussed. The availability of standard reference works, indexing and abstracting services, and machine-readable databases, etc., should be noted. Since availability of staff is critical in making the collection accessible, this may be discussed by the assessor. It is especially important to include an assessment of staff needs if additional staff will be needed to serve the program.

Description of Needs to Achieve Desired Level

A summary evaluation drawing from the assessment techniques and the assessor's judgment should state whether the current collection is adequate to support the proposed program. The assessor should state the desired collection level from the WLN Conspectus procedures and state whether the collection meets this level. If not, describe what measures must be undertaken to attain the desired collection level. Further, the report must include a statement of one-time funding which should be spent immediately upon approval of the program and a statement of ongoing costs associated with sustaining the collection at the desired level. The costs may be categorized into monographs, print and digital and current and retrospective; serials, print and digital and current and retrospective; other materials and other formats, including online databases. The assessor should not include lists of materials to be purchased in the report.

Special factors, such as staff and facilities, which will impact the accessibility of the collection may be noted. While not a part of collection assessment in the strictest sense, accessibility to the materials may be critical to the success of the library in supporting the program.

Financial Support

For all additions to the collection, an approximation of costs to obtain the needed materials must be included. This estimate should include:

S   Estimated one-time costs to be expended upon approval of the program

S   Estimated ongoing costs to sustain the collection at the desired collection level

There are several sources, none completely satisfactory, for materials' pricing data. The *Bowker Annual* includes indexes for materials pricing. These are published annually for the preceding year. The hardcover book index in the *Bowker Annual* reflects a broader spectrum of materials than is generally purchased by academic libraries and should be used with caution. Local expenditures data, if available, may be used to modify the *Bowker* data. On the other hand, the periodicals index may reflect a narrower range than most university subscriptions and may also need to be modified by local data.

Vendors offering approval plans supply cost data as part of the management reports. They usually include the total list cost if all books in a category were purchased and the average list price for books in the category. If cost data is available for several years, it may be possible to forecast anticipated increases.

Choice annually publishes price information for academic books. The price information is compiled using the reviews appearing in *Choice* during the previous calendar year. The data include figures for the number of titles published and reviewed by field, the percent of total titles this number represents, and the average price per title for books in each field. In addition, the table compares the data with other years so that trends in prices can be determined. Periodical price indexes appear annually in the April 15 issue of *Library Journal*. Periodical price updates have also been published in *Serials Librarian* since 1981.

Forecasting estimated costs in an inexact exercise. "Forecasting Price Increase Needs for Library Materials: the University of California Experience" describes one library's experience with price forecasting. Although this article focuses on forecasting for the annual materials budget, the process can be helpful in forecasting the for the new program cost estimates. In addition to the sources identified in this manual, there are other sources for price index information, included at the end of this chapter.

Institutions submitting new proposals vary in their treatment of the information supplied by the library faculty. The full program proposal may include the library component as submitted by the library faculty or it may summarize the information. However the library component is used, the cost estimates for library materials must be included in the overall budget projections given for the new program.

Executive Summary

The executive summary should be brief and contain only relevant information; the basic requirements are a statement of desired collecting level needed for the new program and an assessment of whether the library collections are adequate or inadequate. If the latter, state what kind of effort in dollars, acquisitions, and staff will be required over how long a period of time. The executive summary should introduce the library component report with the report itself serving as the documentation.

Special Cases

<u>Collections Supporting Joint Programs</u>

A number of institutions have proposed joint programs of study, and preparation of the library component for these proposals requires a somewhat different approach to collection assessment. First, the staff for the participating libraries needs to determine the pattern of use that students, faculty, and researchers will follow for the joint program. Will users in both institutions need equal access to all library collections? Will the library collection be roughly equivalent or will there be a division of collecting responsibilities? Should the assessment treat the library collections as one or should separate assessments be completed for each library? The answers to these questions will need to be determined through consultation between the two library faculty and between the library faculty and the departmental faculty.

A joint proposal will require a high degree of communication to insure that all participants are in agreement. As a result, joint proposals may require more time to complete. Additional assessment measures may need to be applied in joint proposals. Methodologies that explore the degree of overlap as well as identify unique titles may be important. OCLC offers their Automated Collection Assessment and Analysis Service (ACAS), a collection analysis service that studies overlap. Reports that detail degree of overlap by specific classification numbers and identify unique holdings are available. If libraries submitting a report for a joint program proposal have completed retrospective conversion for the subject fields being assessed, the overlap study might be a useful tool.

<u>Collections Supporting Two or More Similar Programs</u>

Occasionally, an institution will submit proposals for new programs that are closely allied and that will essentially draw their resources from the same library materials. If the library determines that this is the case and determines that the same assessment will suffice, then it is acceptable to use the same library component report for the proposals. This is only acceptable if the proposals are being submitted to ACHE at about the same time. If as much as eighteen months lapses between submission of the proposals to ACHE, the assessments would likely result in different findings and separate reports should be submitted.

SOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON PRICE INDEXES

American Library Association
Resources and Technical Services Division
Resources Section
Library Materials Price Index Committee

Price indexes provides libraries with information on average prices of certain classes of materials, as well as an index to their increase (or decrease) in price over previous years. Price indexes are useful in justifying budgets and allocating funds for library materials. This listing provides names of those indexes which appear yearly in the *Bowker Annual* under the sponsorship of the ALA/RTSD/RS Library Materials Price Index Committee. Additional information about the various price indexes accompanies those indexes in the *Bowker Annual.* Some of the indexes are new and others undergo changes from time to time.

U.S. HARDCOVER, MASS MARKET PAPERBACKS, AND HIGHER PRICED PAPERBACKS:
These three indexes are compiled from the citations in the *Weekly Record.*

U.S. PERIODICALS:
The Periodical Price Index is based on selected subscription costs of approximately 3,200 American periodicals. This index also appears annually in *Library Journal.*

ACADEMIC BOOK PRICE INDEX:
Based on data from Baker and Taylor, Blackwell North America, and Coutts, this index appears for the first time in the 1985 *Bowker Annual.*

COLLEGE BOOK PRICE INDEX:
Using the reviews from *Choice* for a calendar year, this index also appears for the first time in 1985, both in the *Bowker Annual* and in the April issue of *Choice.*

BRITISH ACADEMIC BOOKS:
Based on reports published by the Center for Library And Information Management, Loughborough University. The caveats issued in the *Bowker Annual* about these data should be noted.

GERMAN BOOKS :
Compiled from average prices which appear in the annual issue of *Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen.*

LATIN AMERICAN BOOKS:
This index gives the number of titles purchased and their average cost broken down by 24 Latin American nations. No attempt is made to index the prices, although prices are compared to the previous year.

MEMBERS OF ALA/RTSD/RS LIBRARY MATERIALS PRICE INDEX COMMITTEE:
The members of the Library Materials Price Index Committee (LMPIC) would like to be kept informed of any local library materials price studies.   The current membership can be found in the most recent *ALA Handbook of Organization.*

Revised March, 1985
R.H. Werking
Trinity University

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Resources and Technical Services Division
American Library Association

ALABAMA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Sample *Library Component Report*

EVALUATION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ALABAMA
BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAM IN MUSIC THERAPY

I.   COLLECTION LEVEL

According to guidelines established for collection assessment which measure both the extent of existing library holdings and the ongoing collecting activity in subject fields in terms of academic level, bachelor's programs such as the one in music therapy are rated at the study level. This level includes a wide range of basic monographs, a selection of representative journals, and the reference materials germane to the subject.

The evaluation of the University's library collections to support the study of music therapy indicates that holdings in general not only meet, but far exceed the criteria for a study level collection at the bachelor's level. This does not take into account the strong resources available at the System's medical library, whose geographical proximity encourages on-site use and obviates the need for access via interlibrary loan. A relatively small investment of funds will be necessary to acquire the small corpus of music therapy-specific journals and monographs for areas in which deficiencies exist.

The evaluation excluded foreign-language materials. This will have little or no impact on the proposed program since its orientation is principally professional and there will be little use for works published in languages not read by most undergraduate students. Their absence should not inconvenience music therapy faculty either, since it has been noted that researchers in the behavioral sciences tend to ignore foreign-language publications. The low incidence of foreign-language works in *The Psychology of Music,* edited by Diana Deutsch (N.Y. : Academic Press, 1982) (hereafter, *Deutsch*) and the *Journal of Music Therapy* either confirms this or is evidence that English is the preferred language for publication in this field.

II.   MONOGRAPH COLLECTION ASSESSMENT

The University libraries presently include over _____ cataloged volumes supporting the University programs of instruction and research. Organized by Library of Congress classification, this collection includes approximately _____ volumes in the area of music therapy and related fields.

Library collections needed to support the new program in music therapy fall into three major subject areas: 1) works in music theory, music history, and applied music training; works in music therapy *per se;* and 3) works in the psychology of music.

<u>Works in Music Theroy, Music History and Applied Music</u>
Library holdings in this area were not reviewed since course work for the new program will be identical to that for the Existing Bachelor of Music degree, and the necessary library resources are already in place. Furthermore, the music collection is currently undergoing extensive development in response to a newly implemented D.M.A. program.

<u>Works in Music Therapy and Works in the Psychology of Music</u>
To assess the adequacy of the existing collections in music therapy and music psychology, the University's library staff employed a technique known as citation analysis. For the present study, they checked all English language citations in books and journals (with the exception of tests, dissertations, and conference proceedings because of doubts as to which of the latter had actually been published) in the five most recent issues of *Journal of Music Therapy* and in *Deutsch*, a state-of-the-art review of music psychology literature. Together, these two sources resulted in a total of 270 citations to monographic titles, and 657 citations in 208 journals. Of 54 monographs cited in the *Journal of Music Therapy*, the Library owns 35, or 65%. Purchase of the 11 titles still in print that are not held would boost the success rate to 85%. Of 216 monographs cited in *Deutsch*, 138 or 63.9% are held by the Library. The acquisition of the 35 titles still in print would raise the success rate to nearly 81%. Given the medical component of some music therapy literature, a small sample of citations was also checked against the journals received by the System's medical library.

To assess the rate of current publishing in these areas, two sources were checked. The *Library of Congress Subject Catalog* lists only 24 English-Language titles published since 1976, and 8 of these were of an ephemeral or popular nature. These findings were confirmed by a random search of the last five years of *Music Index*, which cited a number of music therapy publications in French and German but only a handful in English.

<u>Related Monograph Collections</u>
As an applied, clinical profession, music therapy draws upon the literature of a number of other disciplines: education and education research, music and music theory, audiology and acoustics, speech and hearing disorders, special education, cognitive and experimental psychology, and pure medicine. Given the University's programs in these areas, most of them at the doctoral level, there are strong supporting library collections. For example, the Library subscribes to 297 of the 314 titles covered by *Education Index*: those not received are not scholarly or are of peripheral interest. The basic collections in

medicine of the Health Sciences Library are buttressed by the research collections of the System's major medical library readily accessible for on-site ,intensive research. Holdings in special education were recently reviewed in connection with College of Education accreditation and the site visitor's report commented favorably on the range and quality of the Library's collections.

Strong library collections for these disciplines, including a complete file of ERIC documents and a collection of dissertations on microfiche assembled by the University of Oregon's College of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, resulted in a high success rate in checking citations against Library holdings.

III.   SERIAL ASSESSMENT

To supplement the monograph collection, the University Libraries currently subscribe to over _____ serial titles; of these, approximately _____ are directly or indirectly related to music therapy. The Library receives 54 of the 62 titles cited in the *Journal of Music Therapy*, or 87%. Of the 123 backfile volumes, the Library holds 92 of them, or 75%. It is worth noting that with just the acquisition of the backfiles of the *Journal of Music Therapy*, which accounted for 20% of the citations, the success rate would rise to 87%. It is clear that the Library receives most of the primary journals of interest to authors published in the *Journal of Music Therapy*, since the 8 journals to which the Library does not subscribe produced only 9 citations out of the total of 123 (7%) .

The broader time span of the literature survey in *Deutsch* produced citations to 146 English-language journals. The Library subscribes to 97, or 66% of the total. More significantly, the Library held 425 of the 534 backfile volumes cited, a success rate of 80% owing to the fact that 49 Journals, one-third of the total of 146, produced only 20% of the citations.

IV.   FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Serials
The Library needs to place new subscriptions to 14 journals (6 in music therapy, 4 in music psychology, 2 in psychology, and 2 in acoustics) to achieve a collection of exceptionally high quality in support of the new program. The continuing cost will be $_____ per year at current prices. Some journal backfiles will need to be acquired at a one-time cost of $_____.

Monographs
The corpus of non-journal publications limited strictly to music therapy is small. Since the Library's approval plans for new English-language monographs currently provide coverage of the other literature relevant to music therapy, acquisition of purely

professional publications is estimated to cost an additional $_____ per year at current prices. Thirty-nine professional society publications issued prior to 1983, mainly by the National Association for Music Therapy, are still in print. Their acquisition will be a one-time cost of $_____. As the new program develops, it may be desirable to acquire on a one-time basis second priority monographs in physiology and music psychology, at a cost of $_____. With the ongoing monograph and serial subscription commitments and one-time retrospective purchases of monographs and serial backfiles, the University's, library collections in support of teaching and research in music therapy will achieve study level status and more, and will become an important library resource for the entire state.

V.   RECOMMENDED LIBRARY EXPENDITURES

Costs	Continuing	One-Time
New Serial Subscriptions	881.80	
Serial Backfiles		1,462.20
New Monographs	150.00	
Retrospective Monographs		585.08
Totals	**$1,031.80**	**$2,047.25**

PREPARING THE COLLECTION ASSESSMENT REPORT
For Further Reading

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CHAPTER 8

COLLECTION ASSESSMENT FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Review of Existing Programs

In 1984, the Alabama Commission on Higher Education began a five-year cycle of review of existing academic programs offered by Alabama academic Institutions. The process to be used for this comprehensive review is determined by each institution and may or may not require an assessment of the library resources supporting the program. When an institution chooses to assess a library collection in its review, the methodologies outlined in this manual may be useful. In addition, the assessor may want to consider using some of the user-centered assessment methodologies outlined by Blaine H. Hall in his *Collection Assessment Manual for College and University Libraries.*

Statewide Cooperative Collection Development

The objective of the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries is to coordinate statewide resource sharing. An important component of this program is cooperative collection development. It has undertaken a project of program assessment and funds proposals to strengthen statewide library resources. As part of the funding activities, the Network requires submission of an "Institutional Plan for Collection Development" which requires an assessment of the program area in which NAAL funds will be spent. A copy of the guidelines for the NAAL Collection Development Program are included at the end of this chapter.

Library Collection Development Policy

It is not the purpose of this manual to discuss the writing of a collection development policy. However, a written collection policy in each of the Alabama's academic institutions is an important step toward meeting NAAL's objectives for resource sharing, coordinated collection development, and collection enhancement on a statewide basis. The planning, evaluation, and report writing that results in a new program proposal demonstrates tangible progress toward NAAL's goals. The results of an assessment can be used as preliminary documentation for the institution's own collection policy. Strengths to be built on and weaknesses to be corrected can be identified. Each library completing a library component report is urged to take the next step and write a collection development policy for the subject under review. These policies will become important tools for communication among NAAL's members. In addition, a collection development policy can serve as guidelines for a library in addressing issues such as budget constraints and accommodating users in a community.

NETWORK OF ALABAMA ACADEMIC LIBRARIES
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Purpose

The purpose of the collection development program of the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries is the enhancement of statewide library resources in support of graduate study. When funds are appropriated to the NAAL collection development program, it will have two project activities: Collection Development and Collection Enhancement.

Guidelines

1.   NAAL funds used for collection development must be used in established graduate and first professional degree program areas recognized by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education in the ACHE *Inventory of Academic Programs.*

2.   All material (or its surrogate) purchased with NAAL funds will be available to the other NAAL institutions through interlibrary loan.

3.   Bibliographic records for all materials acquired with NAAL funds will be added to the OCLC/SOLINET database within one year of the purchase.

4.   NAAL collection development funds can only be used in addition to normal financing of the library acquisitions budget and not as a substitute for such institutional funding.

5.   The institution must be able to document the expenditures of NAAL funds for Collection development through its institutional fund accounting system.

6.   At the end of each NAAL fiscal year, the institution must file with NAAL a report of the acquisitions program and its benefit to the institution and to NAAL. This report must be filed before NAAL Collection development funds can be released for the next NAAL fiscal year.

7.   All institutions that receive Collection development funds must participate in the NAAL resource sharing program by making all of the library resources available to other NAAL institutions without charge.

Collection Development

1.   Collection Development represents local Collection building activity intended to raise the local acquisition rate in a discipline to a level which more nearly corresponds to the level of the ACHE-recognized program it is supporting.

2.   It is, in essence, a supplement to local Collection funding, and is a recognition of (a} the proliferation of approved Academic programs in the state, and (b) the historic under-funding of Alabama higher education.

3.   Collection Development funds are to be used to support **level 3** collecting intensity.

4.   The Collection Development program recognizes the need for overlapping collections at **level 3** and acquisitions under this program serve to distribute the state's interlibrary loan load more evenly.

5.   Because Collection Development funds are intended to be used to improve local collections, eligibility for their receipt is linked to maintenance of effort. Institutions must demonstrate that local funding for materials will not diminish as a result of a NAAL Collection Development award.

6.   No institution is eligible for Collection Development awards until it has certified completion of the conversion of the bibliographic records of the circulating Collection to machine-readable format.

Procedures

1.   Each institution must complete a Collection assessment in the program area in which NAAL funds will be spent using the methodology outlined in the *NAAL Collection Assessment Manual.*

2.   Each institution will file with NAAL an Institutional Plan for Collection Development which will describe the materials to be purchased with NAAL funds. This plan will :

        a.   Include the Collection assessment document

b.   Identify the specific Subject areas in which acquisitions will be made (NAAL recognizes that funds awarded for Collection development in a program area in the *ACHE Inventory of Programs* could be used for materials in complementary subject areas which support the program).

c.   Identify specific strengths and weaknesses

d.   Describe existing collection strength

e.   Determine desired collection strength

f.   Determine existing collecting intensity

g.   Identify retrospective materials to be added.

3.   Acquisitions approved under the NAAL Collection Development program would be used to support **level 3** collecting intensity. Criteria for acquisitions under this program are:

a.   Non-duplicative materials in circulating collections

b.   Unique serial backfiles

c.   Duplicative monographs in circulating collections,

d.   Duplicative serial backfiles

<u>Collection Enhancement</u>

1.   Collection Enhancement is an activity which adds **new materials** the aggregate of the machine-readable holdings of the NAAL members.

2.   Materials acquired under the Collection Enhancement program will be those items that are likely to be expensive, highly specialized materials, consisting of either monographs not previously existing in the circulating collections of member libraries, or unique serials backfiles.

3.   Acquisitions approved under the NAAL Collection Enhancement program are to be used to support levels 4 and 5 collecting intensity. Criteria for Acquisitions under this program are:

a.   Non-duplicative materials in circulating collections,

b.   Unique serial backfiles.

4.   Eligibility to receive Collection Enhancement funds is not linked to maintenance of effort. These funds are to be used to enhance the unique research resources of the state and are to be made available to all the NAAL members.

5.   Twenty percent of the funds available for the NAAL Collection development program will be set aside for competitive grants under Collection Enhancement guidelines.

6.   All institutions will be eligible to compete annually for the Collection Enhancement awards.* Each competing institution will file with NAAL a Collection Enhancement proposal which will describe the materials to be purchased with NAAL funds. This plan will :

a.   Identify specific strengths and weaknesses

b.   Describe existing collection strength

c.   Determine desired Collection strength

d.   Determine existing collecting intensity

e.   Identify retrospective materials to be added

*   The NAAL Collection Development Committee will develop procedures for competing for these grants.

Approved by the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries Advisory Council on June 16, 1987.

COLLECTION ASSESSMENT FOR OTHER PURPOSES
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